



THE
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A
HISTORY
OF
RUSSIA,
VOL. III.



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THE
CABINET CYCLOPÆDIA.

CONDUCTED BY THE
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ANALYTICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL

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HISTORY OF RUSSIA.

CHAPTER I.

RETROSPECT OF THE REIGN OF CATHERINE. — INFLUENCES OF FEMALE RULE. — DISTINCTIONS TO BE DRAWN BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIFE OF CATHERINE. — PROFLIGACY OF THE COURT. — CORRUPTIONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT. — POWER OF THE FAVOURITES. — CHARACTER AND CAREER OF POTESKIN. — MIXED TRAITS IN THE CHARACTER OF CATHERINE. — SOURCES OF THE REVENUES OF RUSSIA. — VARIOUS CALCULATIONS OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT. — FAILURE OF TAXATION TO SUPPORT THE PRODIGALITY OF THE EMPRESS. — HER FINANCIAL PROJECTS IN CONSEQUENCE. — DRAIN OF THE PRECIOUS METALS, AND ITS CAUSES. — INTRODUCTION OF PAPER MONEY. — ORIGIN AND FATE OF THE ASSIGNATS. — CONFUSION OF THE MONETARY SYSTEM. — ADULTERATION OF THE COIN DETERMINED UPON. — CATHERINE CONSIDERED AS A PATRON OF LETTERS. — HER CODE OF LAWS. — OUTLINE OF ITS LEADING FEATURES. — ITS FINAL TENDENCY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ABSOLUTE DESPOTISM. — CATHERINE'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH VOLTAIRE. — HER DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS, AND LITERARY CHARACTER.

THE reign of Catherine II. produced so great an effect upon the character of the people, that a retrospect of its leading features, and a glance at the state of the empire at this period, will be necessary to exhibit the rapidity with which Russia was now advancing towards that commanding position in European affairs which she has subsequently attained.

For 100 years, Russia had been the theatre of the most extraordinary revolutions, social and political, that had ever taken place in the world within so short a period of time. A great experiment had been commenced by Peter I. ; but it demanded a genius like his own to watch over its progress, and confirm its success. Such was the state of barbarism in which he found the empire upon his accession to the throne, that he was obliged to adopt severe measures in order to bring about those habits of domestic life which he had observed in other countries, and which admitted women to a participation in the advantages of society. Previously to his time, women were regarded in Russia as inferior beings, compelled to do all the menial offices, excluded from general intercourse, and treated with uniform indifference and contempt, that frequently took a form of cruelty.* Yet in less than forty years after his death the sceptre passed four times into the hands of women. A transition so complete could not have been effected without producing some remarkable consequences : nor is it surprising that these reigns should have been so prolific of wars, disorders, insurrections, and corruption, since it may be presumed that the people were not easily reconciled to the government of female sovereigns. That the manners of the court were improved, must be admitted : the mere rudeness of barbarous power was softened, and a tone approaching to European elegance was substituted for uncouth ferocity and selfish pomp. But vices of another kind crept in—the vices of luxury, of inordinate indulgence, and of that most criminal species of flattery, which intercepts the complaints of a people on their way to the throne, and transforms them into panegyrics. To temptations of this description women, who felt their place in the scale of society suddenly ad-

* It would almost seem that the Russians would not allow women to be possessed of *souls*. The word signifying *soul* in the Russian language, was formerly used to designate male slaves ; nor is the usage yet wholly abandoned. The female slaves went for nothing, or were counted like heads of cattle. Nor did the poll-tax, which was a tax on souls, include women.

vanced from servitude to the height of power, were peculiarly exposed ; and, if they did not discharge their grave obligations with prudence and self-denial, the fault is partially to be attributed to the circumstances by which they were surrounded, and partly, no doubt, to that very exultation which the acquirements of unaccustomed authority ordinarily produces.

Catherine carried the dangers of female rule to the last extremity. Whatever is graceful in the female mind, encouraging in its domestic influence, and refining in its gentleness, she perverted to the worst purposes. Whatever she did upon the single impulse of her womanly nature, apart from the exercise of the imperial functions, was a dishonour to her sex. If the coarse licentiousness of her life had ended where it began, it would scarcely become the province of history to touch upon it with more than a passing rebuke ; but she corrupted the whole empire. The dissoluteness of her court was too public, too flagrant, and too little veiled by appearances, to escape the notice and imitation of the people. In a country where the sovereign is regarded as the fountain of all human power, and the arbiter of life,—where the deeply-seated superstitions of slavery have absorbed in a vulgar reverence for greatness all the rights of private judgment,—the example of the court is the ready apology for the profligacy of the nation. The immoralities of governors are claimed as precedents by the governed ; and so, in their several degrees of authority, the vices of the throne descend through its subjects, until they have reached the very lowest grade. The excesses of Catherine, her ruinous and capricious pleasures, and her assumption of sexual irresponsibility, by which she cast away for ever the dignified claims of virtue, which constitute the true superiority of women, were rapidly emulated in practice, not only by the ladies of the court, but throughout all classes of society. The slavish homage, mixed with fear, which was paid to Catherine, led to exorbitant demands upon the part of the Russian women. Their sex was in the ascendancy,

licensed to have its own self-will unrestrained, and they were resolved to profit by the opportunity. The wives of the principal generals controlled the movements of the war, received reports at their toilettes, and regulated in detail the operations of the army.* From the assertion of such an extraordinary supremacy, it was but a step to the assertion of impunity in the affairs of love. Arro-gating a distinct superiority over the other sex, the Russian ladies at length came to make the first advances where their passions were concerned, and to conduct the whole machinery of intrigue. Like the empress, every lady had her appointed favourite, whom she dismissed at pleasure to make way for his successor ; and marriage finally degenerated into a convenient compact to give a sort of authenticity to the most criminal courses. These evidences of moral debasement would not have been so degrading, if there had yet lingered amongst the people the grace of preserving an external show of decorum ; but even the sense of an outward respect for purity no longer existed. Shame was extinguished in the people, for Catherine gloried in the publication of her criminalities.

In this point of view (in illustration of which it is needless, as it would be revolting, to accumulate details), the reign of Catherine was productive of the most pernicious consequences. Combining great talents for government with the most repulsive depravity, her character presents two phases, which must be separated before we can arrive at a just estimate of the influence she exercised upon her age. Her private and her public life were singularly contrasted ; and it is because this distinction has not been drawn with sufficient clearness and decision that many persons, in the indignation excited by her conduct as a woman, have involuntarily done injustice to her merits as a sovereign. That such an anomaly should have existed is to be deplored, since it

* One instance is well authenticated of the wife of a colonel, who, when her tent was surprised by the Swedes, came out in regimentals, and marched against the enemy at the head of a battalion. See *Mémoires Secretes, passim*.

brings the most lofty qualities into association with the worst passions ; but it is the business of history to vindicate the mysteries of truth.

The court was distinguished by the grossest vices. Catherine instituted secret societies, where depravities were permitted to take place which are too revolting for record. Even in her old age she did not abandon these degrading habits ; and in her manner, deportment, and conversation she exhibited at seventy-five the same immorality that had darkened the whole of her previous life. Yet, although she possessed in society a certain charm and grace, that fascinated every body around her,—the fascination being, of course, enhanced by the elevation from which it played,—she was not remarkable for beauty either of face or person. Her forehead was expansive and commanding ; her eyes, grey and penetrating, betrayed a disagreeable sinister expression ; the lower part of her face was large and coarse ; and a curve at the base of the nose indicated the character of hypocrisy. Her figure was of the middle height, and appeared still lower in consequence of her corpulence. When she was in the midst of her orgies, or when, for any purpose, she put on airs of courtesy, a smile of great sweetness overspread her features ; but, the object for which it was assumed being at an end, it vanished in a moment : even her politeness was an act of insincerity. Yet, notwithstanding these traits of dissimulation, she was capable of acts of magnanimity. Her favourites—none of whom had ever reached her heart, leaving posterity to decide the problem whether she had one—never suffered an unkindness at her hands. When she dismissed them, she loaded them with favours ; when they offended her, the only revenge she ever took was to promote them to offices of great emolument at a distance from her presence. Those whom she voluntarily discarded went into other countries to exhibit their magnificence, and dissipate the treasures she had lavishly bestowed upon them ; and, having exhausted their vanity or their fortunes, they generally returned to enjoy fresh

proofs of her liberality. It may be doubtful whether these evidences of tenderness, so unusual in sensual despots, may be referred to magnanimity, to a blunted perception of what was due to herself, or to the vanity of defective passion. But she gave some evidences of greatness of mind that were above suspicion. Colonel la Harpe, a republican, was intrusted with the education of the young princes; and, although he was a man of uncompromising integrity, and was known to instil his own principles into the minds of his pupils, Catherine, even after she had remonstrated with him on the subject in vain, did not remove him from his office. She respected the honesty with which he maintained his opinions, opposed as they were to the whole course of her policy. Another instance is furnished in the case of a brother of Marat, who, during the frenzy of the French revolution, lived in Petersburg, in a house of Soltikoff, the chamberlain. He condemned the excesses of his brother, but at the same time did not hesitate to avow himself to be favourable to the doctrines of the revolution; yet Catherine not only did not punish him, but, to protect him from any possible danger from her dependants, permitted him to change his name. For a time during her reign, Russia was the only country in Europe in which French newspapers were not prohibited: but the *Moniteur* having several times taken great liberties with her name, and spoken somewhat too freely of the court of Paul, she desired it should not be circulated in future until it had been submitted to her inspection. Shortly afterwards, she found a paragraph in it which described her as the *Messalina* of the north; yet, instead of being offended, she observed that, as it concerned only herself, it might be distributed. But these are instances to show, not that her character was magnanimous, but that she was occasionally capable of acts of magnanimity. Radischef, one of the finest spirits the empire had ever produced, was exiled to Siberia by her orders, because he ventured to publish a pamphlet against despotism.*

* The mere tyranny of Russia, even advanced as the empire is in a sort

She sometimes permitted a free opinion to go abroad in a sudden impulse of indifference, but she always repented of the risk, and quickly resolved herself again into a tyrant.

Where so much immorality prevailed at the court, it is not surprising that it should have descended through every grade of authority, until, at last, the executive government became utterly corrupt. Every person holding an appointment, civil or military, lived upon the abuse of his trust. The governors of provinces, the chiefs of departments, generals, judges, down to the lowest functionaries, were alike accessible to bribes, and justice and advancement were to be procured only by purchase. The public finances were squandered upon the luxuries of individuals, and the empire was literally surrendered up to the hands of an oligarchy, who gorged themselves upon the industry of the people. Catherine, encouraged this system of plunder, not merely by giving the most striking example of it in her own person, but by applauding the magnificence with which such nefarious practices surrounded her. A petty official, whose income, which he did not possess any honest means of increasing, scarcely amounted to 40*l.* per annum, became so rich by pillage, that he built several sumptuous houses in the neighbourhood of the palace, the

of comparative civilisation, remains unchanged to this day. No man in Russia is at liberty to publish his opinions; and even the books of foreign travellers, incidentally touching upon the habits and institutions of the country, are prohibited. Dr. Lyall's work on the Russian character, flattering as it is in the main, highly incensed the emperor Alexander, to whom, under a mistaken estimate of that sovereign's justice, the author had dedicated it. An instance of despotism of another kind occurred in the year 1836. The chevalier de Marigny, consul to the king of the Netherlands at Odessa, had made three voyages to Circassia for the purpose of instituting inquiries into the customs, religion, &c., of the people. As the public had exhibited great curiosity for information relative to the Circassians, and as portions of M. Marigny's journals had found their way into print in Paris in 1820, it was considered advisable to publish the work; but the Russian government, aware that it contained many statements which were not favourable to the court of St. Petersburg, brought it out themselves, during the absence of the author at his consular post, making such suppressions and additions as entirely perverted his views to their own purposes. This fact is a small but conclusive illustration of the vigilance exercised by the Russian cabinet to keep Europe in the dark concerning its policy.

value of which was estimated at nearly 13,000*l.* ; yet Catherine, instead of punishing the fraudulent servant, expressed her gratification at the embellishment of her capital, and regarded it as a sign of the prosperity of her reign. Extortion was carried on to such an extent, and prevailed so generally, and was so little disguised by any machinery of forms, that the government of Russia, in the latter years of her reign, must be considered to have been maintained solely from that source. The great officials shared in the rapacious exactions of their inferiors, and the distribution of favours, and the dispensation of awards of every description, was effected through a series of bribes that were deposited in relative proportions in the hands of the several functionaries, from the valet up to the governor. That the system was recognised and authorised by the empress is evident from the fact that the regular pay of the servants of the crown was entirely inadequate to the demands of their position. The pay of a colonel, for example, was about 70*l.* or 80*l.* per annum ; yet they usually contrived to net a profit varying from 1500*l.* to 2000*l.* The way in which they accomplished this fraud was by turning out the regiment, wherever it was stationed, into free quarters, and appropriating to their own use the whole of the money intended for its support. On one occasion, when a minister asked the empress some favour for a poor officer, her emphatic reply was, “ If he be poor, it is his own fault : he has long had a regiment ! ”

The secret and original spring of these corruptions must be traced to the favourites of the empress. The necessity of maintaining a few guilty parasites and their dependants in a style of wanton grandeur produced all those evils in detail, which affected the whole empire, even to the remotest places. Invention was exhausted in excuses for heaping honours and emoluments upon them. A variety of national projects were undertaken, and sums of money advanced from the public coffers to carry them into effect ; but the individuals intrusted with

those projects devoted one half of the amount to their private use, and then, on the pretext that the grant was insufficient for the object, applied for more, which was given, or the enterprise altogether abandoned at so much clear loss to the country. A multitude of pretences were devised for supporting troops of hirelings at the public expense, to swell the arrogance of the courtiers. New counts and princes were created daily ; and these were perpetually changing places and giving way to others, at a time when a revolution against titles and aristocracy was devastating France. The old nobility, who, at least, possessed the advantages of superior education and habits of authority, were out of fashion at St. Petersburg ; and the base passions of the empress inundated the capital with a spurious race of flatterers, ennobled from the dregs of the multitude. The vulgar libertines, who were thus elevated to the highest rank in the state, gave a tone of depravity to the manners of the court, which secured their ascendancy over Catherine, and contributed still farther to demoralise the people. Sometimes a soldier of the horse guards, sometimes a Servian slave (destined afterwards to become sovereign of an appanage), ascended to the first place in the favour of the empress, and, during his session of power, filled the court with his own friends, making the most of his brief period of degrading ascendancy.

Of all her favourites, Potemkin was the most distinguished, and the most powerful. For sixteen years, Catherine was guided by his counsels, and governed the empire through his agency ; and even after he had retired from the office to which she had promoted him near her person, he continued to influence her policy. In his double capacity of soldier and statesman, Potemkin displayed abilities of the highest order ; and, had his ambition been less overbearing, he might have produced a new era in Russia. As it was, he effected many reforms of importance, especially in the organisation of the army. Under his command, it was considerably augmented, while its discipline, its appearance, and its

tactics, were greatly improved. In addition to the benefits he conferred upon the service, he formed a nursery of soldiers, drawn from a section of the Russian subjects who had previously been of scarcely any utility to the empire. The Cossacks had hitherto formed amongst themselves a species of volunteer militia, regulated by republican laws. Potemkin was not slow to discover in that hardy and lawless people the elements of military strength, which demanded nothing more than consolidation with the troops of the empire to render it effective in war. He accordingly abolished the Cossack militia, and formed it into regiments, recruited, and disciplined like the rest of the army, placing them at the outposts in the first instance, where they were subjected to the most rigorous duties. The conduct of the Cossacks in the campaigns of after years, their indomitable courage, their power of endurance, and their devotion to their commanders, have abundantly justified the favourable anticipations of Potemkin. The alterations introduced by Potemkin were all upon a grand scale. The same proud and dominant spirit that exhibited itself in the magnificence of his style of living, when he was basking in the smiles of the court, was equally displayed in the labours of his administration. It must be admitted that, while he exercised the functions of president of the council of war, he swept away many abuses in the army, and succeeded in forming the first thoroughly European force that had ever been firmly established in Russia. He unquestionably possessed greater power for accomplishing such an object than even Peter the Great. A part of his power consisted in the recklessness of his expenditure. The revenues of the empire were under his control, and the cost of a reform presented no obstacle to his determination to bring it about. Where Peter would have hesitated from prudential motives, preferring a more gradual movement in the direction of change, Potemkin decided at once. If the people suffered, on the one hand, by this lavish system of improvement, the empire gained in a much greater

degree on the other ; and, as Russia was now rapidly assuming a more responsible attitude amongst the nations of Europe, the peculiarity of her situation afforded a reasonable justification of the minister's thirst for glory. Amongst other novelties which he introduced, were some distinct corps of choice troops, consisting of 40,000 grenadiers and as many chasseurs. The Russian cavalry was insignificant when Potemkin undertook the command of the army ; but he soon increased that force, and formed regiments of hussars, which, until his time, were unknown amongst his countrymen. He also created several companies of flying artillery, an invention for which the world is indebted to the genius of Frederick of Prussia. The advantages which the military force of the empire derived from him are best illustrated by the fact that, when Catherine ascended the throne, it was immeasurably inferior to that of France and Prussia, and when Potemkin died he bequeathed to his country the finest army in Europe. The character of Potemkin is one of the marvels of history. Perhaps there never was a statesman who united in his own person such contradictory qualities. Greatness and meanness, firmness and fickleness, were so blended in his nature, that, from whatever point of view we regard him, we shall be equally perplexed between wonder and aversion. The most striking and faithful portrait extant of this extraordinary man is to be found in a letter written by the prince de Ligne to count Ségur, from the camp before Oczakoff, on the 1st of August, 1788. This sketch may be transcribed, as a characteristic illustration of a reign, with the most brilliant period of which Potemkin was directly identified. After speaking of the zeal of Potemkin, the prince de Ligne proceeds : — “ Trembling for others, brave himself, stopping under the hottest fire of a battery to give his orders, yet more an Ulysses than an Achilles ; alarmed at the approach of danger, frolicsome when it surrounds him ; dull in the midst of pleasure ; unhappy in being too fortunate, surfeited with every thing, easily disgusted, morose, inconstant, a pro-

found philosopher, an able minister, a sublime politician, or like a child of ten years of age ; not revengeful, asking pardon for a pain he has inflicted ; quickly repairing an injustice, thinking he loves God, when he fears the devil, whom he fancies still greater and bigger than himself ; waiving one hand to the females that please him, and with the other making the sign of the cross ; embracing the feet of a statue of the virgin, or the alabaster neck of his mistress ; receiving numberless presents from his sovereign, and distributing them immediately to others ; accepting estates of the empress, and returning them, or paying her debts without her knowledge ; alienating and repurchasing immense tracts of lands, to erect a grand colonnade, or plant an English garden ; again getting rid of this ; gambling from morn till night, or not at all ; preferring prodigality in giving to regularity in paying ; prodigiously rich, and not worth a farthing ; abandoning himself to distrust or confidence, to jealousy or gratitude, to ill-humour or pleasantry ; easily prejudiced in favour of or against any thing, and as easily cured of a prejudice ; talking divinity to his generals, and tactics to his bishops ; never reading, but pumping every body with whom he converses, and contradicting to be better informed ; uncommonly affable, or extremely savage ; affecting the most attractive or the most repulsive manners ; appearing by turns the proudest satrap of the east, or the most amiable courtier of the court of Louis XIV. ; concealing, under an appearance of harshness, the greatest benevolence of heart ; whimsical with regard to time, repasts, rest, and inclinations ; like a child, wanting to have every thing, or, like a great man, knowing how to do without many things ; sober, though seemingly a glutton ; gnawing his fingers, or apples or turnips ; scolding or laughing ; mimicking or swearing ; engaged in wantonness or in prayer ; singing or meditating ; calling and dismissing ; sending for twenty aides-de-camp, and saying nothing to any one of them ; bearing heat better than any man, whilst he seems to think of nothing but the most voluptuous

baths ; not caring for cold, though he appears unable to exist without furs ; always in his shirt without drawers, or in rich regimentals, embroidered on all the seams ; barefoot, or in slippers embroidered with spangles ; wearing neither hat nor cap (it is thus I saw him once in the midst of a musket fire) ; sometimes in a night-gown, sometimes in a splendid tunic, with his three stars, his orders, and diamonds as large as a thumb round the portrait of the empress (they seem placed there to attract the balls) ; crooked, and almost bent double, when he is at home, and tall and erect, proud, handsome, noble, majestic, or fascinating when he shows himself to his army, like Agamemnon in the midst of the monarchs of Greece. What, then, is his magic ? Genius, natural abilities, an excellent memory, much elevation of soul, malice without the design of injuring, artifice without craft, a happy mixture of caprices, the art of conquering every heart in his good moments ; much generosity, graciousness, and justice in his rewards ; a refined and correct taste ; the talent of guessing what he is ignorant of ; and a consummate knowledge of mankind." Some allowance must be made for the antithetical affectation of the lively Frenchman ; but the picture is singularly true and impressive notwithstanding. Its chief value is that it reflects with fidelity the characteristics not merely of Potemkin, but of Catherine, her court, and her reign. Her whole life was a series of contradictions.

In her private life, Catherine was as generous as she was magnificent in public. The immediate circle by which she was surrounded loved her with sincerity, because her bounties, however misplaced, were bestowed with kindness and condescension. In her court, she was affable, humane, and tolerant ; — outside that privileged boundary, she was arbitrary and uncompromising. The scene of her vices was also the nurse of her best qualities ; and where her greatness was most visible, there also appeared the worst criminalities of her reign. The defect was in her nature, which always tempted

her to the side of ease and indulgence, while her passions and her position urged her into extremities on the other side, that made her appear as if she were perpetually struggling against herself. That she contributed largely to the glory of Russia is undeniable ; and, taking into consideration the imperious temper she showed upon public affairs, it was, perhaps, fortunate for the empire that her attention was so frequently carried off in another direction by her voluptuous desires. Whatever was meritorious in her life is to be attributed to the force of her own character. Her counsellors were the instruments of her will : none of them, with the exception of Potemkin, aspired to guide her policy, and even Potemkin maintained his ascendancy only by the simulation of obedience. Her ambassadors were cunning and dexterous ; her generals courageous and fortunate ; but her ministers were chiefly remarkable for ductility and perseverance. To her own activity, firmness, and penetration, therefore, must be referred the honour, such as it is, of having conducted Russia through a period of unexampled corruption to a height of power it had never reached before. The last ten years of her reign consummated at once her power and her disgrace. Upon the death of Frederick, she achieved the summit of her glory ; and, crushing the intrigues of Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, she became the arbitress of the crowned heads of Europe. Her immense empire, almost as marvellous as a region of romance, the enormous treasures she had accumulated, the luxury of her court, the wealth of the favourites, whose fortunes were created by her caprice, the brilliant victories of her arms, and the dazzling projects to which her inordinate ambition was directed, were calculated not merely to disturb the repose, but to compel the admiration, of contemporary princes. In the midst of her exultation, however, and at a time when she was disposed to encourage liberal institutions at home, the French revolution suddenly cast a light upon Russia, that developed the crimes upon which

her external magnificence was based, and exposed to the world the machinery of that internal despotism by which a barbarous people had been raised to such an extraordinary rank amongst older and more refined nations. That event acted like an electric shock upon the mind of Catherine : it completely changed the current of her designs, and inspired her with the most furious hatred of all measures that had a tendency to improve the condition, or enlarge the freedom, of mankind. She had been the patroness of letters, of science, and of philosophy ; less for the sake of those social ameliorations which their diffusion must have ultimately produced, than because they contributed to spread the glory of her name. But, until the French revolution discovered the power of a people resolved to resist the encroachments of the throne, Catherine seems to have been indifferent to the results of those accidental advantages of knowledge which, for selfish ends, she had permitted her subjects to enjoy. On the sudden, however, she awoke from her dream of vanity to a consciousness of the perils that surrounded her. One of her favourite schemes was the revival of the empire of Greece, and the re-establishment of a popular government in the emancipated territory ; but that design, as well as every other that was likely to affect the principle of unlimited and irresponsible authority in sovereigns, she renounced for ever. She could not see that her own injustice to the Poles, and the dissensions which she had brought about in Prussia and Sweden by her grasping and ambiguous policy, were amongst the main causes of that revolution which now threatened to shake the foundations of the crowns of Europe to the centre. Nor was she sufficiently instructed in human nature to discern the wisdom of appeasing popular violence by wise concessions, instead of resisting it by increased despotism, which, in the end, gives fresh excuses for discontent, and produces a more extended and solid combination of the oppressed. She betrayed her hatred of the new spirit that had entered into

the minds of men, by a multitude of unworthy acts ; descending, in a paroxysm of agitation, from her lofty throne to quarrel about trifles in the crowd. She who had been the correspondent, the friend, and the disciple of the French philosophers, now became their bitterest enemy. The bust of Voltaire, which formed one of the chief ornaments of her gallery, was cast out from its place, and thrown amongst the lumber of the palace. The bust of Fox, also, which, but a year before, when that statesman opposed the proposition of the English cabinet to declare war against Russia, she had personally solicited, was treated in the same way, because he now, with equal strenuousness, resisted the motion to make war upon France. The American revolution, which she had previously affected to admire, she did not now hesitate to denounce as a rebellion of the most flagrant character. Washington she described as a traitor, and asserted that no man of honour could wear the order of Cincinnatus.* Such were the petty vents through which the ineffectual rage of Catherine escaped in that memorable crisis of her life.

One of the most remarkable features in the reign of Catherine, and, in reference to the domestic condition of the empire, also one of the most important, is that which embraces her financial policy. The subject is vast, and crowded with difficulties, arising partly from the ignorance manifested by the Russian government of the science of finance, and partly from the recklessness and cupidity with which supplies were raised to meet the emergencies of temporary occasions. It will be necessary, in order to arrive at a clearer view of the subject, to show, in the first instance, the sources from whence the revenue of the empire is derived. This development of the machinery of taxation will explain why so many contradictory statements of the finances of Russia have been published, and why, even in the official departments, it has been found impossible to estimate with accuracy the total income of the state.

* *Mémoires Secretes*, &c.

The sources of the revenue are numerous, and various kinds of tributes are rendered in different places ; but, as these several branches of income do not finally become consolidated under one head, many of them being special in their nature and excluded from the imperial returns, it is impossible to exhibit, with any approach to accuracy, a complete view of the whole. The secrecy in which some of these levies are involved in their progress from the people to their destination must be regarded as one of the evidences of a government without responsibility. A part of the revenue is made up into official tables ; the remainder is never accounted for. In other words, the income of Russia may be divided into two general heads,—the known and the unknown.* The principal items of which the former is composed may thus be described ; but it must be observed that some of these items are partially composed of tributes that are never accurately ascertained, or officially acknowledged.

Tax or Per-centage of one per Cent. on the Capital of Merchants.—This tax, which, in other countries, would be considered oppressive and inquisitorial, was submitted to without a murmur in Russia. The manner in which it was levied, by giving the merchant a motive for paying it, rendered compulsion unnecessary to its collection. No person could be a merchant unless he possessed, or stated himself to possess, a capital of 500 rubles ; the statement of its amount being left entirely to himself. But, in proportion to the extent of his capital and the amount he paid to the crown, were the privileges he enjoyed of a commercial, official, and civil nature. It was therefore clearly his interest, not merely to come forward voluntarily to pay the tax, but to pay it largely, for the sake of the credit and consideration it would bring him. The policy of the regulations in reference to this impost is sufficiently obvious. The odium

* Such are the divisions literally adopted by Malte-Brun and Depping in the tables affixed to their continuation of L  vesque's *Histoire de la Russie*.

which a tax upon capital must have otherwise incurred was taken off by accepting without inquiry the returns made by the persons assessed ; while the amount collected had a constant tendency to increase even beyond the real per-centage on the property actually assessed, in consequence of the advantages conferred on individuals as they ascended in the scale. This tax was introduced into the provinces of the Baltic for the first time in 1783. The highest annual amount paid by any individual merchant in the reign of Catherine was about 1000 rubles.

Head-money, or Poll-tax. — This impost was levied only on males ; but it included males of all ages, from infancy upwards. The Cossacks of the Don and other tribes were exempted from it ; as also the merchants who were rated under the previous head. The amount per head varied according to the grades of the people, and was otherwise subjected to mutations at the caprice of the government.

Imposts in Domain Lands. — A portion of these imposts belongs to the unknown or unascertained revenues : such are those that pay in produce instead of money. The direct taxation consists in *obrok*, a yearly tax upon the crown and agricultural boors. The Russian government has gradually increased this tax (perhaps because it presses upon the most unprotected part of the community), from the date of its origin up to the present time.

Customs Duties. — In the reign of Catherine, these duties rapidly increased. The duties paid at Riga, in 1773, were little more than 540,000 rubles, and in 1786 they reached nearly to 750,000. At Revel, in 1768, they amounted only to 17,000 rubles, and in 1789 they were increased to 340,000. At St. Petersburg and Cronstadt, a similar improvement was manifested. In the nine years from 1771 to 1780, the amount paid into the custom-house of these ports (which are united under one establishment) amounted to 16,640,000 rubles ; but in the nine following years, from 1780 to

1789, the total was 28,000,000. These are but three ports of the empire ; but, being amongst the most important, we cannot speculate from them upon the rest. Busching states that a commission, in 1764, found the duties at the remaining seaports and frontier towns to amount to 3,000,000. Tooke* estimates the total, during the life of Catherine, at 8,000,000 ; but he is evidently below the real amount.

Duties on Kabaks, or Public-houses. — This forms a very considerable item in the revenues, and, with certain exceptions, is a crown monopoly. The crown farms out the public-houses, compelling the contractors to take from the crown the whole quantity of corn-spirits stated in the contract, whether there be a demand for it or not. The quantity of brandy sold in this way by the crown has always been enormous. Busching states that the contract for kabaks at Petersburg and Moscow brought in 3,320,000 rubles annually. Tooke estimates the total income from this source at 8,500,000 rubles.

The Salt Duties. — Salt is also a crown monopoly. The net income is, perhaps, not more than a fourth of that derived from the kabaks, in consequence of the fluctuations in the cost of procuring salt at different places, and the great expense of carriage.

Duties on stamped Paper. — The cost of this article to the purchaser is high, and the income to the government proportionate.

Poschlin, or Duties on Law Proceedings. — This head embraces several particulars, — petitions, writs of appeal, passports, &c. Throughout the whole progress of the claimant for justice, he is obliged at every step to pay law duties to the crown.

Land Tolls. — A productive and equitable source of income : one of the few duties that confer mutual benefit on the people and the crown.

The Crown Mines. — It is very difficult to form

* See View of the Russian Empire during the Reign of Catherine, *passim*.

any speculation upon the probable value of the Russian mines. Tooke rates the annual income at 1,800,000 rubles; which was, even in Catherine's time, much below the actual amount. The progress that has been made in the discovery of ore since that period has increased the produce to an almost incredible extent.

The Mint.—From the coinage of gold, silver, and copper, the crown derives a direct profit, which varies according to circumstances. The pood of copper, for instance, cost the crown, from its own founderies, about five rubles, and was coined into sixteen. But, sometimes, it became necessary to purchase copper, as well as gold and silver, and then the profit was reduced, in consequence of the higher price given for the ore.

Duty on Sales of immovable Property, Houses, Lands, &c.—This is a very ancient impost, and was originally fixed at ten per cent., afterwards lowered to six per cent., and finally to five, in 1787, by the empress Catherine.

A variety of other levies may be thrown together, as being uncertain in their collection, and subject to many contingencies: such are the taxes on natural productions, which are in some places paid in kind and by way of tribute, and in other places in money; the recruit money, which merchants pay in lieu of furnishing a stipulated quota of recruits for the army; the posts, which yield a net profit only where their maintenance costs nothing to the crown, while in some provinces, such as Ingria, the keeping up of the post-houses (which the owners of estates are responsible for) is a direct burden to the people, without yielding any fiscal advantages to the government; excise and recognition duties; rent for ground, houses, shops, beehives, fisheries, public inns, &c., levied by the crown; and a multitude of desultory penalties, for such offences as neglect of specified duties, keeping accounts in arrear, concealing deserters, or making or selling brandy contrary to law.

These are the principal heads of revenue of which

any distinct returns can be obtained ; but even in some of these heads the returns are necessarily defective : for instance, the whole income arising from the mines cannot be ascertained, since a part of it flows into the privy purse, and is never accounted for ; and other fractions of it go to the colleges of war and medicine. Then, again, some tribes pay their tributes in fur and leather, which are consumed by the army, and which, although they form an item in the resources of the government, cannot be exhibited in the shape of money. In like manner, many provinces discharge their pecuniary obligations to the crown by performing certain services, which are equivalent to money, but which do not come into the estimates. There are also certain incomes, such as the fishery of the Oural river, granted to the Cossacks, which are assigned instead of pay, and which are never taken into account, although, in fact, they constitute a regular part of the income of the state. Hence it is that the revenues of Russia can never be clearly or positively ascertained ; that all speculations on the subject must be erroneous, since the data upon which they are based are extremely imperfect ; and that the resources of the government may be enlarged to almost any conceivable extent, while to the eyes of Europe the nominal amount may receive scarcely any noticeable increase.

In consequence of the difficulty of arriving at a correct view of financial results, the calculations that have been made by various writers have been found to present most extraordinary differences. Some historians have estimated the total revenue at 10,000,000 of rubles, and others at 18,000,000, for the year 1788, for example. Mr. Busching, in the early editions of his Geography, stated the revenue of the year 1770 to have been 16,000,000 ; but in subsequent editions he increased the amount (bringing it down to the time of Catherine II.) to 24,000,000. His reasons for adopting this estimate were founded upon an assertion in an ukase of Catherine's, issued in 1786, to the effect that,

without increasing the burdens of the people, she had rendered the amount more than double what it was when she ascended the throne. Assuming, therefore, the revenues, in the reign of Elizabeth, to have been 10,000,000, this calculation would seem to be tolerably correct. But Mr. Busching was undoubtedly in error in fixing the amount so low. Frederick II., so early as the reign of the empress Anna, estimated the revenues of Russia at between 14,000,000 and 15,000,000 ; and, as it is well known that, from that period, the income of the government increased considerably every year, it is evident that this calculation falls very short of the fact.

Both Anna and Elizabeth prosecuted expensive wars, and executed many costly public works, without bequeathing to their successors any national debt. The outlay of Catherine on wars, colonies, charitable, industrial, and educational foundations, besides the lavish pomp and extravagant splendour of her court, could not have been sustained without a still greater levy on the country. It is true that she remitted many duties and taxes ; that she abolished some of the ancient farms, and even a few of the rich monopolies that had been enjoyed by the crown ; but, on the other hand, the empire obtained vast accessions of wealth during her reign. The channels through which they were procured may be thus enumerated : — annexations by conquest ; the extension and encouragement of commerce ; the reduction of the property of the church, the bishops, and the monasteries, by which the crown obtained a great number of boors, large tracts of forests and productive lands, and several valuable mines and works, that had previously been rendered lucrative by the enterprise of the clergy ; by the introduction of the *obrok* ; by bestowing greater care and more vigilant superintendence upon the mines ; the establishment of new duties ; the diffusion of the poll-tax over provinces that had hitherto been exempted from its operation ; and by a variety of reforms in the collection of the revenue. In this respect, Catherine

may be regarded as the first sovereign of Russia who brought to the fiscal department the advantages of decision, system, and activity. The Gotha calendar of 1790 estimates the annual revenue at 35,000,000 ; an amount that has been adopted from that work in several subsequent statistical publications. Mr. Coxe, whose general accuracy entitles his opinions to be received with respect, calculates the net income at nearly 42,000,000. At the same time, he expresses some surprise how the empress could have maintained, by resources comparatively so limited, the munificence and pageantries of her court. In the last edition of Lévesque's history *, the annual revenue is estimated at 47,114,084, by the continuators of that work. Tooke (who deserves the praise of taking great pains in the collection of materials, although he is remarkably infelicitous in his use of them) exhibits an elaborate view of the various items of finance, and sums up the whole at upwards of 46,000,000 ; expressing, at the same time, his belief that it amounted to still more, and stating that, by another calculation which he had made, he brought the total to 48,000,000. From these contradictory speculations, it will be evident that the means of furnishing an authentic table of the revenues of Russia do not exist. One fact, however, is sufficiently established by these conjectural estimates ; namely, that the national income of Russia considerably exceeds that of almost every other country in Europe, and that its actual value is enhanced by the comparatively low rate of wages, of necessaries, of products, pay, and of all those items of expenditure which are essential to the sustentation of its numerous military, civil, and commercial institutions. It is, perhaps, to this circumstance that we may refer, more than to any other, the invisible springs of the gigantic power of the empire, which exhibits itself every where in fleets daily augmented ; in the immense increase of the consular establishments ; in the spread-

* Histoire de la Russie, &c., par Pierre-Charles Lévesque, revue et augmentée, &c., par MM. Malte-Brun et Depping.

ing influence of the diplomatic body, which is conducted at an infinitely greater cost than that of any other state; and in the rapid increase of towns, fortresses, canals, railroads, dockyards, arsenals, *entrepôts*, and public buildings of the most sumptuous character, which the extending wants of the population and growing importance of the country have rendered necessary. Looking at this particular reign, we find other channels of expenditure besides those that came within the objects of the public service, and which were so extravagant, that we are justified in presuming the actual income received by the crown during the lifetime of Catherine must have been greater than it ever reached before or since. It has been estimated that her favourites alone acquired at her hands, in real property, pensions, and gifts, no less a sum than 88,820,000 rubles.*

The means adopted by Catherine to enlarge her resources were direct, open, and arbitrary. She did not hesitate to supply her wants by the publication of ukases enforcing such levies as she happened to require. It never occurred to her to adapt her expenses to the revenue, but to raise the revenue to the height of her expenses, which were also in the ratio of increase. All her historians agree that she doubled the revenues; nor would it be a very bold speculation to assert that she trebled them, although the fact cannot be proved by documentary evidence. For example, previously to her reign, the poll-tax did not amount to a ruble per head: she tripled it. In the same way, for the sake of the pecuniary profits it yielded, she encouraged the extension of the sale of spirits; which tended even more than the dissoluteness of her court and her followers to demoralise and debase the people. She was the better enabled to accomplish this object, in consequence of the sale of brandy, as well as that of salt, being a crown monopoly. With the exception of Livonia, Esthonia, and White Russia, where the nobility have preserved to themselves the right of distilling and sell-

* The Life of Catherine II., 1798.

ing brandy, every person, in every other part of the empire, who wishes to make it is compelled to enter into a contract with the crown, by which he binds himself to furnish a certain quantity at a stipulated price. If he distils a larger quantity than is specified in his contract, his whole property is liable to confiscation ; and rigid domiciliary visits are paid from time to time, to watch over his progress and exact the penalty. The contractors of the crown receive the brandy from the distillers, and re-sell it to the public-houses, at a clear profit varying from 70 to 80 per cent. The Russian nobility make a disgraceful use of their privilege to retail brandy, by establishing booths for its sale at the doors of the churches, in the proceeds of which, not unfrequently, the clergy are participators.

But even this method of raising the revenue did not suffice to meet the wants of Catherine. The frauds of the executive, the rapacity of the favourites, and the sumptuous habits of the empress, required vaster means than could be obtained by taxation. Hence it was that the destructive expeditions which are recorded in her reign were undertaken ; hence, she descended upon Lithuania in 1773, and upon the Crimea in 1784, which she pillaged and depopulated ; and in the same spirit, and to gratify the same inordinate demands, Moldavia was overrun and Poland dismembered. The temporary results, however, of these measures only led to fresh necessities, and at last forced Catherine to adopt an expedient (the introduction of paper money) which, had it been honestly and cautiously conducted, might have conferred lasting benefits upon the empire. The history of the Russian assignats is one of the most curious chapters in the annals of Europe. It is necessary to enter upon some details in order to render it intelligible.

The vast extent and scanty population of Russia had always been unfavourable to the circulation of money, which was consequently slow and difficult. Previously to the time of Catherine, the circulating medium con-

sisted of gold, silver, and copper ; but a variety of causes conspired to diminish, year after year, the actual quantity of the precious metals in circulation. From the earliest periods even to the present time, the custom of burying money in the earth has prevailed amongst the Russian peasants, who, having no inheritance, and being incapacitated from possessing property, are desirous of appearing even more miserable than they really are, to protect themselves from the cupidity of their lords.* The state of society, no doubt, originally suggested this mode of laying aside the accumulations of industry ; and so fearful are the enslaved serfs of their fellows in bondage, that the peasant buries his specie in the most secret manner possible, unwilling to confide even in his wife or children, lest they might betray or plunder him. Slavery, in this respect, takes something of the character of guilt ; and one of the vices it engenders is the annihilation of those confiding and domestic virtues that belong to the condition of freedom. As the serf is at all times liable to be drawn for a soldier, or to be sold by his master, or to be removed from one place to another, it often happens that the buried treasure is never heard of again ; so that the specie is not merely drawn out of circulation for a time, but frequently disappears altogether. Some attempts have been made to calculate the probable quantity of money thus withdrawn, but they are so entirely speculative, that they cannot be relied upon with

* The proprietor of the soil does not hesitate to seize upon the savings of the peasant, even by fraudulent pretences, if he can discover it. A recent example— one amongst a multitude— may be cited from Clarke's *Travels in Russia*. We will give the anecdote in his own words :—"A peasant in the village of Selo Mólodi, near Moscow, who had been fortunate enough to scrape together a little wealth, wished to marry his daughter to a tradesman of the city ; and for that purpose, that she should be free, he offered 15,000 rubles for her liberty ; a most unusual price of freedom, and a much greater sum than persons of his class, situated as he was, will be found to possess. The tyrant took the ransom ; and then told the father, that both the girl and the money belonged to him, and, therefore, she must still continue among the number of his slaves. What a picture do these facts afford of the state of Russia ! It is thus we behold the subjects of a vast empire stripped of all they possess, and existing in the most abject servitude ; victims of tyranny and torture, of sorrow and poverty, of sickness and famine."

confidence. It was estimated, in the reign of Catherine, that about 30,000 workmen and artisans of various kinds came from the distant provinces annually to St. Petersburg, where they were employed for about six months in the year; and that the total amount of their earnings was at least 2,000,000 of rubles per annum. Of that sum two thirds were supposed to have been expended upon their maintenance, and in discharge of their obligations to the crown and their masters, and the greater part of the remainder, converted into specie, was believed to have been buried.* In Moscow, and all the other large towns of the empire, the same custom was observed: but it is clearly impossible to found any satisfactory calculations upon data so fragmentary and conjectural. It is certain, however, that large sums were constantly withdrawn in this way from the circulation. If we add to this continuous drain, that still greater waste of specie which the profligate career of Catherine (especially during the last ten years of her reign) brought upon the country, we shall not be at a loss to understand how the finances of Russia became so deranged as to render the creation of the assignats, to a certain extent, unavoidable. Catherine was utterly ignorant of the science of finance. She was wholly intent upon the accomplishment of present purposes, and was as indifferent to their probable results as, in some points of view, she was really unable to foresee them. Thus, she was unaware of the enormous evils she inflicted upon the empire by sending out of it such quantities of gold, to purchase the perfidy of spies in other countries, and to prosecute secret designs for ulterior purposes of aggrandisement. She reflected only on the point she desired to gain, and was reckless of the agency by which it was to be secured. In Poland, for instance, she expended immense sums on the traitors who facilitated the slavery of their native land: millions were sacrificed in Moldavia to win over the nobility; in Constantinople, to keep up a system of espionage; and in

* *Mémoires Secrets, &c.*

the Archipelago, Albania, and other places, to bring about an insurrection amongst the Greeks and the subjects of the Sublime Porte in the Adriatic gulf. The grand policy of Catherine (as it has, indeed, been of her successors*), in reference to other countries, was to effect by the means of gold those ends which are ordinarily procured by war or negotiations. Whenever any object could be reached by bribery, the creatures of the Russian court were provided with a *carte blanche*, which they often devoted to uses of a very different kind from those for which it was intended, but which were quite as corrupt.† By lavish measures such as these—of which it is needless to multiply the examples—gold was rapidly exported in large quantities from Russia. It may be observed also that another drain upon the empire was occasioned by the rigorous exclusion of all articles coming directly from France; which had the effect of compelling the Russian merchants to purchase from other countries with specie what they used to purchase from France by exchanges. France was the only country in Europe that could supply Russia with the oil and wine which she required, and which were amongst the most essential and important productions she consumed.

In these circumstances, Catherine, unable otherwise to gratify her extravagant propensities, had recourse to assignats. She commenced the issue of these notes with many pledges of the integrity of her intentions, declaring that she would never permit the amount to exceed 100,000,000 rubles, for which a bank, established for that purpose, was rendered responsible.

* The last time the Russians crossed the Balkan, the employment of their gold at Adrianople was notorious.

† Many instances of fraudulent conduct in the base ministers of Catherine might be referred to. The cases of those adventurers—Yevlitch, Cauziani, and Tamara—who were sent at different periods to the Archipelago, and other places, to corrupt the inhabitants, enriched themselves with the monies which were intrusted to them, and, of course, failed to fulfil their missions. They were all tried on their return to St. Petersburg, and one of them was disgraced, but afterwards taken into favour. Virtue alone is poor in Russia. The incorruptible general Yhrmann, who resisted, in his official capacity of director-general of the mines of Kolivan, the attempts of Catherine's ministers to abuse his authority and bribe him into subserviency, died a beggar.

At first, she kept good faith with the people, and the issue of assignats bore a just proportion to the amount of specie in reserve. The convenience of the paper money, and the confidence which was in the beginning reposed in the empress, speedily brought the assignats into universal demand. They presented such facilities to the intercourse of a population so widely scattered, and where transactions were hitherto in a great measure conducted by the cumbrous medium of copper, and they were so useful in the representation of the large sums that were deposited in the hands of bankers and other capitalists, that they increased in popularity, until the course of exchange rose to between two and five per cent. in their favour. The opportunity was not thrown away upon the ardent genius of Catherine. The production of an unlimited quantity of assignats cost her nothing more than the price of so much paper; and the temptation was of a kind which she found it impossible to resist. In a little time, she manufactured assignats to six times the amount to which she was restricted, not only by her limited power of redemption, but by her own solemn pledges. Instead of 100,000,000, she put 600,000,000 into circulation. The effect of this fraud was inevitable: the assignats gradually fell in value, were at last rejected altogether, and a panic, scarcely short of a national bankruptcy, ensued.

The progress of this calamity was rapid; and the machinery by which it was precipitated proves that Catherine, in the headlong career to which she committed herself, was equally destitute of principle and of knowledge. The war with Turkey, by drawing a portion of the specie out of the country, had the immediate effect of depreciating the assignats ten per cent.; and the division of the army in Moldavia, which rendered a still larger exportation of gold inevitable, speedily occasioned a farther depreciation of ten per cent. more. In the ordinary operation of a monetary system, conducted with a due regard to the interests of the public creditor, some efforts would be made, under circumstances such as

these, to restore the credit of the paper currency, either by limiting its issue, or drawing back gold, wherever it could be obtained, into the country. But Catherine acted upon a policy exactly the reverse of this very obvious mode of proceeding. In proportion as specie became scarce, she multiplied the quantity of assignats, thus by a double movement diminishing their value more and more. Nor was she content with this unwise and fraudulent fabrication of paper, but went so far as to issue a new species, called cabinet notes, the proposed object of which was to discharge her own private debts. These cabinet notes partook something of the nature of exchequer bills, and something of the nature of ordinary bills of exchange. They were payable at the end of a year, and bore interest at the rate of six per cent.; but, in the event of the interest not being claimed immediately after the expiration of the year, it was refused to be paid, nor would the treasury reimburse the holders of the notes until they had exacted a bonus from them. The consequence of this was the ruin of thousands. Tradesmen, into whose hands these notes happened to fall, or who were obliged to accept them in cases of necessity, were glad to negotiate them at a loss of forty per cent.: and at last it became impossible to negotiate them on any terms. The direct consequence of this breach of good faith was the total withdrawal of public confidence from Catherine, who was personally implicated in these transactions, and a servile war against the crown. The price of all goods that were sold to the court was raised to three times their former value; and, between the corruption that prevailed amongst the minions of the palace (who took advantage of all such convulsions to enrich themselves), and the cupidity of the traders, the disasters of this eventful period were unparelled.

The rapid disappearance of gold and silver cast the empress upon other resources besides the over-issue of assignats. The coin of the empire was progressively adulterated, with a view to diffuse a smaller intrinsic value over a larger space; but this device was only pro-

ductive of fresh misfortunes. Credit fell with such fatal certainty, that the ruble in specie sank below its intrinsic value, according to the rate of exchange in London and Amsterdam; and all persons who possessed the means of speculating upon this disastrous state of things perceived in it a means of profit which increased the general calamity. The Polish Jews bought up the rubles wherever they could find them, and sent agents into the provinces of the interior, and to all parts of Riga, Revel, and Courland, to collect them, selling them afterwards in Prussia and Austria, where they were melted down, and re-issued, at a considerable advantage. Gold and silver at length disappeared altogether; and, when the government could no longer affect indifference to the ruin they had caused, they established a species of inquisition into the circumstances; detected some of the dealers in gold, and punished them in revenge for their own delinquencies. But this recognition of their errors came too late. There was nothing left of the metallic currency except copper. Even here, perhaps, something might have been done towards arresting the evil, had certain measures been adopted in the working and regulation of the mines: but corruption was busy at the spring of the ore. The ministers, who were accustomed to derive some profit from every source of revenue they could lay their hands upon, farmed out the mines to their favourites, and participated in the fruits of the public robbery. The condition under which the mines were farmed was, that a certain quantity of metal should be delivered annually to the government; but the contractors, finding a more convenient and profitable market for the copper abroad, were ultimately permitted to discharge their obligations partly in paper, so that the copper went out of the country in large quantities; and at the commencement of 1796, the bank, being unable to change the assignats, was upon the point of bankruptcy, when the project for adulterating the coin was determined upon. Fortunately for Russia, it was not carried into full operation. A variety of circumstances

had contributed to throw the finances into disorder, and it was the pressure that ensued which produced this desperate scheme. A new mint was established in a palace which belonged to Peter I. on the gulf of Finland, and it was put into action with incredible velocity. The first experiment was tried with the copper coins, which were re-stamped at double their former value; the silver pieces of ten kopecks were to pass for twenty, and those of twenty for thirty; while the gold coinage, still retaining its former nominal value, was reduced one sixth in weight. Another part of this extraordinary project was to call in a part of the assignats at a low price, and then to raise the value of those that remained in circulation. A scheme so fraudulent and so impracticable is scarcely to be credited: it is calculated to excite equal wonder at its boldness and its absurdity, and bequeaths to the world an enigma in the life of an extraordinary woman, who, incomprehensibly ignorant of the art of internal government, was yet able, by the greatness of her spirit, to extend and consolidate her vast dominions. Several millions of this metamorphosed coin were already prepared, and the 1st of January, 1797, was fixed upon for its issue; but the death of the empress in the previous November at once arrested the completion of her insane design. The adjustment of the financial difficulties was left to her successor, whose first step, at least, was marked with caution; for he at once suspended the fabrication of the new coin, and declared his determination to leave no means untried to restore the assignats to public confidence. How far he succeeded in that object we shall see hereafter.

Turning from the contemplation of the character of the empress in its political aspects, we come to consider her as a patron of letters and fine arts; a title which some of her flatterers have not hesitated to bestow upon her. That Catherine aspired to a literary reputation, piqued, perhaps, by the fame of Frederick of Prussia, whom she was desirous to rival in all things, although she could not emulate him in any, is shown in the

numerous publications which she gave to the world. But that she produced any impression upon her age, either by the force of her own example, or by the encouragement which she gave to others, is utterly untrue. She possessed no real sympathy for literature, and affected it, rather because it was a contemporary fashion in France and England, than because she comprehended its civilising and refining influences, or appreciated its moral importance.* She put on a pretence of interest in the fortunes of genius with an air of finery, that betrayed the total want of true sympathy, which can alone bring out its inner spirit. She was a coquette in this as in every thing else. Literature made no advances during her reign. If she occasionally extended her favours to men of letters, it was always for the sake of snatching a reflected glory from the association, or for the less worthy motive of purchasing the flattery of the servile *savans* of her time. Deficient in ability to discriminate, she was sometimes as unhappy in her choice of those whom she condescended to befriend, as she was always capricious in the exercise of her protection. The two great literary events of her life — the only ones that are likely to be remembered by posterity — were her publication of a code of laws, which she pompously announced as her own composition †, and her correspondence with Voltaire. It would be a display of idle

* One illustration of the vanity of her assumption of the literary character may be mentioned as a proof of the truth of this assertion. Somebody, who knew her weak point, had told her that she bore a close resemblance to the Minerva of the Greek medals; and from that time forth she played the part on all occasions. The court poets always addressed her as Minerva; and she carried the extravagance so far as to have herself drawn, painted, sculptured, embroidered, carved, and cast in metal, as Minerva, in every corner into which she could insinuate her likeness!

† The code was actually published in Russia, with the name of the empress on the titlepage. It was afterwards translated into English by her permission, and published in London. The following is the elaborate title under which it appeared: — “The grand Instructions to the Commissioners appointed to frame a new Code of Laws for the Russian Empire; composed by Her Imperial Majesty Catherine II., Empress of all the Russias. To which is prefixed a Description of the Manner of opening the Commission, with the Orders and Rules for electing the Commissioners. Translated from the Original in the Russian Language, by Michael Tatishcheff, a Russian Gentleman, and published by Permission. London, 1768.” The volume forms a quarto of grand dimensions.

criticism to enter into any lengthened examination of the former, the chief merits of which consist, not in the originality of the conception, but in the closeness with which it follows the theories and institutes of Montesquieu, and the more celebrated philosophers and jurists of France.* But, as the production of this code was one of the most striking incidents of her life, it cannot be passed over in silence.

The reasons assigned for the institution of a new code of laws were undoubtedly just; and, if Catherine had truly followed out the design which she professed in this undertaking, she would have conferred a great blessing upon the empire; but, perceiving the unsettled state of the laws and the irregularities which prevailed in the decision of judicial questions, she adroitly availed herself of those circumstances, not in reality to extend the privileges of the people, or to consolidate into an intelligible shape the floating maxims of Russian jurisprudence, but to acquire popularity by pretending to do so. Russia already possessed codes of laws. There was the first rude draught of elementary principles, defining the classes into which the people were divided, and securing the rights of property, in the code of Yaroslaf; there was also the code of Alexis, which contained, as far as it went (for Alexis was too much engaged in foreign wars to complete the great work he had begun), a body of valuable provisions for the security of the subject: that was followed by the still more comprehensive and practical code of Peter the Great, which received many important improvements during the reign of Elizabeth. The merit of originality, therefore, which is claimed for Catherine by some historians, is one of those bold inventions that are found only in the pages of hireling writers. It is true that all the former codes were imperfect, and that the increasing wants of the country

* So literally was this code derived from Montesquieu and Beccaria, that it is sated in the Secret Memoirs, that a gentleman, who undertook to translate it, thought he could not do better than copy the text of these celebrated writers. The translation referred to was printed for Grasset at Lausanne.

had produced a variety of new questions, which had not been foreseen by former legislators, and which, consequently, were unprovided for in their institutes. In such cases, the law was propounded verbally by the sovereign, or embodied in an ukase prepared for the occasion; both of which modes of proceeding, it is needless to observe, were guided rather by imperial caprice than by strict principles of justice. As those ukases were constantly superseded, either wholly or in part, and fresh decisions substituted for the direction of the judges, the number of rules and precedents accumulated to such an extent, that the operation became uncertain and confused, arising from the perplexity in which the courts of judicature were placed. The object proposed by Catherine, in her celebrated Instructions, was to repeal at once all these temporary interpretations of law, and to establish an uniform system, which should embrace every essential particular that had been hitherto scattered through a multiplicity of defective regulations. Had she achieved this end, or had she even been sincere in her desire to accomplish it, with a view, as she professed, to confirm and secure the civil and political liberties of the people, she would have been entitled to the designations of "most wise," and "mother of her country," which her subservient deputies conferred upon her. But her code was of no higher value than a series of commonplace generalities, culled from the brilliant axioms of those exquisite theories of human rights, which despotism can so easily evade or pervert. The manner in which this grand scene of legislation was performed was so intensely theatrical, that we detect at once the vanity and hypocrisy in which it had its birth. There was a total want of dignity throughout the whole proceeding. Every contrivance that could be thought of to heighten the effect and take the imagination of the populace by surprise, was introduced into the meretricious ceremonies. Catherine summoned, by an imperial manifesto, the deputies of the different nations of the empire to assemble in Moscow, for the purpose of receiving her

instructions concerning the preparation of a new code of laws. When the vast extent of Russia is taken into consideration, the cost and difficulties of the journey, especially from the remoter provinces, and the singularity of such a recognition of the local authorities in a country where the representative principle was altogether unknown, it might naturally be supposed that the empress was really about to enlarge the rights of her subjects, and to take the opinions of those who were intimately acquainted with their social condition, as to the best means of effecting that desirable end. This curious spectacle, however, was got up for a very different object: it was merely another demonstration of the preposterous extravagance and overwhelming self-will of a woman who was always ready to sacrifice the interests of the millions she governed to her own passions and love of display.

The deputies were called together, ostensibly to take into consideration her instructions, and to deliver in detail their judgment upon them; but it was expected, at the same time (as, indeed, was plainly indicated by the terms of the commission under which they were convened), that they would implicitly adopt the propositions of the empress. In fact, the entire conduct of this transaction was in its nature thoroughly despotic, although it took a shape of condescension and popularity which gratified in proportion as it deluded the assembly. Catherine's secret motive was to receive the adulation which she knew these powerless commissioners dare not withhold from her; and, when the elaborate performance was read aloud to them, and they had delivered their several expressions of wonder and admiration, she dismissed them to their homes, loading the most obsequious with favours, and disgracing by marks of her displeasure those who were so little habituated to court discipline as to suggest any alteration in her proposals. The empty pomp which was observed on the occasion was worthy of its innate hollowness. The empress did not think the importance of the design compromised by

issuing orders for the regulation of her own procession from Anninhoff to the Kremlin, the minute particulars of which were in the last degree ludicrous, as exhibiting a sort of intermediate grandeur between the early barbarism of Russia and the luxurious refinements of France, which was then, in the empress's estimation, a model for the imitation of all other countries. The appearance of Catherine in a coach drawn by eight horses, with a groom carrying a riding-rod on foot at the side of each horse, four running footmen and two blacks, and eight haydukes walking at each side, preceded and followed by coaches, guards, grooms, and court harbingers, had a greater effect in impressing the citizens of Moscow with a sense of her supremacy, than even the code of laws in honour of which this garish exhibition took place. The solemn and imposing forms that were observed, by previous arrangement, at the convocation—the celebration of divine service by the archbishop of Krovvitsky—the delivery of an admonitory address by the bishop of Twer—the subscription of an oath by the deputies—and the speeches of the vice-chancellor and other ministers and officials, full of the most irrational adulation of the empress—betray the real nature of the whole proceeding. Had all this preparation been followed by a liberal system of laws, then it had been a worthy and fitting commemoration of a great event; but the new laws were, in fact, nothing more than a methodical statement of the principles of jurisprudence, which had a very startling effect in theory, but which produced in practice scarcely any perceptible amelioration of the profound slavery under which the bulk of the people were suffering.

The final tendency of this celebrated code is to establish two distinct and unalterable points: 1. the assertion of the absolute will of the sovereign; 2. the enforcement of passive obedience on the part of the people. Every article of the code, however specious in the general turn of the expression, leads directly or indirectly to one or other of these ends. The panegyrists of Ca-

therine, therefore, who pronounced such eulogiums upon her laws, either did not take the trouble to investigate and think for themselves, or were drawn into an historical fraud by the temptations or terrors of their position. A few examples from the code itself will furnish the most conclusive answer to these misrepresentations.

The following is the ninth article, which declares in express terms the arbitrary power vested in the throne:—

“The sovereign is absolute; for there is no other authority but that which centres in his single person, that can act with a vigour proportionate to the extent of such a vast dominion.” *

* The despotism of the Russian sovereigns is an active principle, that never sleeps, and that is felt throughout the whole details of society. It is not merely the assumption of a power which is used in excess only as occasion may appear to require, but a power which is always in operation, and which is never relaxed, except for some corrupt purpose. Catherine’s successors, however they might have differed from her in other points of view, agreed with her on this. They have all kept their domestic ascendancy at the same desperate height. The present emperor has testified to the world, in a variety of ways, his determination to preserve the ancient system. The catechism prepared under his instructions, for the use of schools and churches in the Polish provinces, exhibits this disposition in a very remarkable way. Nor is its political spirit, degrading as it is to human nature, the worst feature it presents: its impiety is still more revolting. An extract from this document will show what little change has taken place in Russia in the character of its internal government since the time of Catherine II.

“*Question.* How is the authority of the emperor to be considered in reference to Christianity?

“*Answer.* As proceeding immediately from God.

* * * * *

“*Ques.* What duties does religion teach us, the humble subjects of his majesty the emperor of Russia, to practise towards him?

“*Ans.* Worship, obedience, fidelity, the payment of taxes, service, love, and prayer; the whole being comprised in the words, worship and fidelity.

“*Ques.* Wherein does this worship consist, and how should it be manifested?

“*Ans.* By the most unqualified reverence in words, gestures, demeanour, thoughts, and actions.

“*Ques.* What kind of obedience do we owe him?

“*Ans.* An entire, passive, and unbounded obedience, in every point of view.

“*Ques.* In what consists the fidelity we owe to the emperor?

“*Ans.* In executing his commands most rigorously, without examination; in performing the duties he requires from us, and in doing every thing willingly and without murmuring.

“*Ques.* Is it obligatory on us to pay taxes to our gracious sovereign the emperor?

“*Ans.* It is incumbent on us to pay every tax in compliance with his supreme commands, both as to the amount and when due.

“*Ques.* Is the service of his majesty the emperor obligatory on us?

“*Ans.* Absolutely so; we should, if required, sacrifice ourselves in

This is explicit enough, at all events, and places beyond the reach of cavil the irresponsible character claimed by Catherine for the sovereign authority. The grounds upon which this assertion of absolutism is defended are, the great extent of the empire, and the necessity of concentration in affairs of business, for the sake of despatch, rendered the more necessary by the great distance of the remote provinces from the capital. It is further fortified by the theory, that it is better to be subject to the laws under one master than to be subservient to many, and by a direct reference to the past experience of the empire, embodied in a declaration to the effect that every other form of government whatsoever would not only have been prejudicial to Russia, but would even have proved its entire ruin. There is no doubt that the Russian empire never could have attained its enormous magnitude, but for the persevering

compliance with his will, both in a civil and military capacity, and in whatever measure he deems expedient.

* * * * *

Ques. How are irreverence and infidelity to the emperor to be considered in reference to God?

Ans. As the most heinous sin, the most frightful criminality.

* * * * *

Ques. What are the supernaturally revealed motives for this worship?

Ans. The supernaturally revealed motives are, that the emperor is the vicerent and minister of God, to execute the divine commands; and, consequently, disobedience to the emperor is identified with disobedience to God himself; that God will reward us in the world to come for the worship and obedience we render the emperor, and punish us severely to all eternity, should we disobey and neglect to worship him. Moreover, God commands us to love and obey, from the inmost recesses of the heart, every authority, and particularly the emperor, not from worldly consideration, but from apprehension of the final judgment.

Ques. What books prescribe these duties?

Ans. The New and Old Testaments, [and particularly the Psalms, gospels, and apostolic epistles.

Ques. What examples confirm this doctrine?

Ans. The example of Jesus Christ himself, who lived and died in allegiance to the emperor of Rome, and respectfully submitted to the judgment which condemned him to death. We have, moreover, the example of the apostles, who both loved and respected them: they suffered meekly in dungeons, conformably to the will of the emperors, and did not revolt like malefactors and traitors. We must, therefore, in imitation of these examples, suffer and be silent."

This blasphemous publication was printed at Wilna, the capital of Lithuania, in 1832, by special order of the Russian government, and issued for circulation in Poland. If any previous doubts existed as to the despotic authority of the emperors, this catechism, which contains the doctrines of the church bearing on that point, ought to set them at rest.

maintenance of the unlimited privileges of the sovereign. So many nations, differing in language and in habits, never could have been bound together by any form of government less decisive and inflexible. This, indeed, constitutes the only feasible excuse that can be offered on behalf of the most despotic rule that has ever subsisted in the world, if any excuse, founded upon expediency or the necessities that arise from the progress of a policy of aggrandisement, can be admitted for such atrocities as were perpetrated by the imperial monsters of Russia. Catherine had the same pretexts for tyranny as her predecessors; but none of them pretended, like her, to recognise the existence of civil and religious liberty. Upon this point, the hypocrisy of the code is, perhaps, unparalleled. Many of the articles actually profess to bestow upon the people those rights that are consistent with the well-being and freedom of the community. In the following passages we have some striking illustrations of the sophistry she employed to make it appear that the grand object she consulted was the happiness and protection of her subjects.

“It is the greatest happiness for a man to be so circumstanced, that, if his passion should prompt him to be mischievous, he should still think it more for his interest not to give way to them.

“The laws ought to be so framed as to secure the safety of every citizen as much as possible.

“The equality of the citizens consists in this; that they should all be subject to the same laws.

“This equality requires institutions so well adapted, as to prevent the rich from oppressing those who are not so wealthy as themselves, and converting all the charges and employments, intrusted to them as magistrates only, to their own private emolument.

“General or political liberty does not consist in that licentious notion, *that a man may do whatever he pleases.*

“In a state or assemblage of people that live together in a community where there are laws, liberty can only consist in *doing that which every one ought to do*

and *not to be constrained to do that which one ought not to do.*

“ A man ought to form in his own mind an exact and clear idea of what liberty is. *Liberty is the right of doing whatsoever the laws allow* ; and if any one citizen could do what the laws forbid, there would be no more liberty, because others would have an equal power of doing the same.

“ The political liberty of a citizen is the peace of mind arising from the consciousness that every individual enjoys his peculiar safety ; and, in order that the people might attain this liberty, the laws ought to be so framed that no one citizen should stand in fear of another ; but that all of them should stand in fear of the same laws.”

The speciousness of these articles requires no commentary. The life and acts of Catherine afford the best interpretation of the purpose which these subtle propositions were intended to disguise. In other parts of the code the deception is not so adroit, and we see more clearly the dark spirit of tyranny that informs the whole. Thus, in the chapter devoted to the description of the sovereign power, we find the following exposition of the monarchy, in which the effort to mask its oppressive tendency struggles in vain through a mesh of vague and indefinite generalities : —

“ What is the true end of monarchy ? Not to deprive the people of their natural liberty ; but to correct their actions, in order to attain the supreme good.

“ The form of government, therefore, which best attains this end, and at the same time sets less bounds than others to natural liberty, is that which coincides with the views and purposes of rational creatures, and answers the end, upon which we ought to fix a steadfast eye in the regulation of civil polity.

“ The intention and the end of monarchy is the glory of the citizens, of the state, and of the sovereign.

“ But from this glory a sense of liberty arises in a people governed by a monarch ; which may produce in these states as much energy in transacting the most im-

portant affairs, and may contribute as much to the happiness of the subjects as even liberty itself."

The last clause is remarkable for the vagueness of its reference to liberty, and the unequivocal spirit in which it lays down the doctrines of arbitrary power. It is curious to trace, in such institutes as these, by what crooked means the oppressors of mankind deceive themselves when they think that they are deceiving others. The end of monarchy, agreeably to this code, is glory; and from glory arises a *sense* of liberty in the people, which the empress informs her subjects may produce as much energy and happiness as even liberty itself. It may be observed, briefly, that a country which would be content with the sense of liberty, without the possession of liberty itself, must be incapable of appreciating, and still less of consummating, its own independence. But even this incomprehensible blessing is not enjoyed by the people of Russia; their sense of liberty is not less illusory than the declarations of the empress.

The moral doctrines of Catherine's system, as might have been expected, are as degrading as the political. We find no provision made for educational establishments*, no anxiety exhibited for the instruction of the people in their domestic or civil duties; but, on the contrary, we find the violation of truth and the cultivation of some of the worst vices recommended, as being essential to the protection of the general interests, and defended by examples of successful treachery in other nations. A single illustration will sufficiently establish the truth of this assertion:—

"The different characters of nations are blended with virtues and vices, with good and bad qualities.

"That composition, or admixture, might be pronounced happy, from which many and great blessings

* The code, however, is not wholly silent on the subject of education. It admits the fundamental importance of education, but laments the impossibility of giving a general education to a very numerous people, and dismisses the matter briefly in a sententious advice to parents to set a good example to their children. It would not have suited Catherine's objects to lay much stress upon education.

spring ; though we frequently cannot even conjecture the cause from whence they should issue.

“ To prove this, I here produce in evidence different examples of different facts. The Spaniards were at all times remarkably eminent for their good faith. History furnishes us with remarkable instances of their fidelity in keeping a pledge intrusted to their care : they frequently submitted to death, rather than betray their trust ; and they still retain this fidelity, for which they were formerly so renowned. All nations, who trade in Cadiz, intrust their fortunes to the Spaniards, and, hitherto, have had no reason to repent of their confidence. But this amazing quality, blended with their laziness, forms such a strange medley, as produces effects prejudicial to themselves. The other European nations carry on all that trade, before their very eyes, which belongs properly to their monarchy only.

“ The character of the Chinese is of a different complexion, and forms a contrast which is the very reverse of that of the Spaniards. The precariousness of their lives (arising from the very nature of their soil and climate) produces in them an activity almost inconceivable ; and so immoderate a fondness for gain, that no trading nation can trust them. This known perfidy of theirs has preserved to them the sole trade of Japan. Not one of the European merchants durst ever venture to engage in the Japan trade under their names, though they might have done it with great ease through their maritime provinces.

“ By what *I** have here advanced, *I* meant not in the least to abridge that infinite distance which must ever subsist between vices and virtues. God forbid ! *My* intention was only to show that all the *political* vices are not *moral* ones ; and that all the *moral* vices are not *political* ones. This distinction ought to be known and carefully attended to, that, in making the laws, nothing

* The Italics in this passage are adopted from the original.

may be introduced in them which is contrary to the general sense of a nation."

It would not have been necessary to dwell at such length upon this subject, had it not been an imperative duty to show that, although Catherine is entitled to credit for having reduced to a systematic form the laws of the empire, yet that, except in a few minor particulars, she neither improved their spirit nor diminished the corruptions and perplexities which obstructed the course of justice. It is true that, in the instructions which she placed before the commission, she expresses her obhorrence of the custom of imprisonment for debt, and exhibits the utmost aversion to tortures and capital punishments; but such sympathies were got up only for state occasions: it does not appear that the people benefited practically by the empress's tenderness on these points. In so far as the work may be considered in the light of a literary production, its merits are by no means striking. The best portions of it are clear and well arranged: these may be at once traced to their source in the writings of the French philosophers. The worst parts are sophistical, entangled, and vapid: these, probably, may be referred to Catherine herself.

Her letters to Voltaire are the most enduring and endurable of her compositions. Voltaire himself (whose praises of royalty, however, are not of much value) declared that they were more interesting than his own. The qualities for which they are remarkable are, nevertheless, of a very ordinary description. They exhibit some graces or playfulness of style, some vivacity of the kind that is most agreeable in a woman, and indicate more talent than Catherine realised in any of her other performances. Perhaps the most vivid impression which these letters are likely to produce is that of regret, that a writer who appeared so capable, in some respects, of contributing to the happiness of her species, should have been placed in circumstances that perverted her nature. The reader of her correspondence is almost

tempted to believe that, had she filled a private station, instead of being called to a throne, her wit and the generosity of her disposition would have rendered her a distinguished ornament of society.

Such of her works as come more legitimately within the range of criticism are of infinitely less merit ; yet, deficient in skill and power as they are, it has been said that she was indebted to a literary secretary* for very important aid in their construction. Her dramatic pieces, written in the Russ, are, perhaps, the best of these productions. The most curious of them was a strange drama, which did not properly belong to any of the received forms of dramatic composition ; but which, founded upon history, and consisting of a succession of pageants and tableaux, appears to have been properly designated as a historical representation. The title of this play was "Oleg," and the hero was the czar of that name. This piece she caused to be performed, with extraordinary splendour, at St. Petersburg, on the celebration of the last peace with the Turks ; and such was the pomp bestowed upon its production, that upwards of 700 performers were engaged in the representation. The aim of the play is to flatter the national feeling in reference to Turkey, and to stimulate the undying passion of the Russians to possess themselves of Constantinople. This purpose is constantly kept in view in the exhibition of the adventures of Oleg, and in the hint thrown out at the close of the performance to imitate his example. The whole of the first act is occupied with the establishment of the city of Moscow, into which a multitude of auxiliaries are introduced, flattering in the highest degree to the aggrandising spirit of the imperial rule. The second act consists of the marriage of Igor, the pupil of Oleg, and the ascent to the throne ; concluding with the departure of Oleg on an expedition against Turkey. The scenes which constitute this part of the drama are worthy, in point of ingenuity and magnificence, of the modern French stage. The old ceremony

* M. Derjavin, known in Russia by the publication of several works.]

observed at the marriages of the czars, intermixed with a variety of comic interludes, dances, and games, — the mingling of courtiers and buffoons, — and the barbaric splendours that shed a sort of glaring lustre over the whole, however we may condemn the taste in which they are conceived, are, at least, adroitly managed in the scenic distribution. The act closes with the embarkation of Oleg and his army, which is, at all events, a fitting picture for the fall of the curtain. But the remaining act aspires to a still higher degree of pictorial dignity. The Turkish emperor is, of course, vanquished, and compelled to accept the terms that are dictated by the victorious Oleg. This necessary tribute to the triumphant arms of Russia being paid, the emperor receives the hero with the most extravagant magnificence. They are discovered feasting at a table covered with the costly luxuries of the East, while, floating around him in voluptuous measures, troops of Greek boys and girls sing odes and choruses in his praise, and execute some of the picturesque dances of their country. A view of the hippodrome follows, when Oleg is entertained with a rehearsal of the Olympic games, a spectacle of singular grandeur and intense excitement. Nor is this all : in a temporary theatre erected at the bottom of the stage, a few select scenes from Euripides are played before the court, to give a tone of classical refinement to the whole. When these pleasant testimonies of the emperor's anxiety to propitiate the good will of the czar are concluded, Oleg rises to depart ; and, as a token of his visit, and a suggestion to his successors to follow his footsteps to the birthplace of their religion, he hangs up his shield on one of the pillars of the building ; and so this historical panorama terminates. The design of this play (if play it may be called) is palpable enough ; but the motive that prompted its exhibition upon the occasion of establishing a peace with Turkey is not very creditable to the good taste of the empress.

That Catherine was deficient in the sensibility re-

quisite to the formation of the literary character, is sufficiently attested by the fact that she regarded poetry and music with a feeling of indifference little short of aversion. She had such a dislike to the noise of the orchestra, that she would not suffer any music to be performed between the acts of a play when she went to the theatre ; yet she had no objection to the most tumultuous, whimsical, and grotesque amusements in the entertainments which she gave at her palace, or received from her ministers. Her caprices in all matters of taste may be accepted as conclusive proof that she was not moved by any very strong or fixed feelings in favour of art. She was fond of witnessing the most ridiculous farces, and of listening to the recital of the most preposterous compositions ; yet, affecting literature herself, she disgraced one of her ambassadors* because, wishing to indulge her humours, he wrote his despatches in a tone of pleasantry, amused himself by composing French facetiæ, was the author of a tragedy, and expressed his desire to illustrate the annals of the country by a series of historical biographies. While she treated one minister with severity because he indulged his vein for such sallies of good humour, she exhibited the utmost partiality for the Austrian ambassador, who was a sort of diplomatic mimic, and who, in his rage for theatricals, appeared to be indifferent to every thing else. So uncertain were her fancies in this way, that the very quality which she encouraged and drew out in one courtier she censured in another ; leaving it to be inferred that it was not the merit, whatever it might be, which she fostered, but the individual in whom it resided. The most distinguished man of letters who lived in Russia in her reign was the indefatigable Müller, whose historical researches are of a very erudite character. But Müller was a German, and the honour of his productions cannot be referred with truth to the fosterage

* The prince Beloselsky, who was complimented by Voltaire on his poetical productions.

of the court, or to the spirit of the age.* The travels of Pallas deserve also to be recorded as belonging to this period : but the time was not favourable to the developement of letters. The public mind was diverted into other channels, and the leisure of the people was chiefly devoted to the cultivation of enervating refinements, imported from other countries,—the fruit and harvest of their wars.

The domestic result of the reign of Catherine was, that she left her people more debased by vices than she found them. Her costliness was a grievous burden to the country; but the example of her prodigality was still more injurious. It must be granted that she completed the design of Peter the Great, and placed Russia in a bold position amongst the European states; but this advantage was not without its alloy. If Russia had become European in a political sense, it had also become European by the adoption of the worst criminalities of its neighbours.

* It was of Müller that Voltaire, whose fallacious history of Peter the Great he severely criticised, observed : “ He is a German, I wish him more wit, and fewer consonants.” It would have been more to the point, had Voltaire been able to refute his arguments.

CHAP. II.

EDUCATION OF PAUL. — HIS EXILE AND PERSECUTION. — HIS HATRED TO THE MEMORY OF CATHERINE. — FIRST MEASURES OF HIS REIGN. — THE BODY OF PETER III. CROWNED WITH THAT OF CATHERINE. — PAUL CONTEMPLATES VIGOROUS REFORMS. — INCORPORATION OF THE GUARDS WITH OTHER REGIMENTS. — CAPRICIOUS ACTS OF THE EMPEROR. — INDISCRIMINATE REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS. — FRIVOLOUS UKASES. — ROUND HATS PROHIBITED. — SLAVISH CEREMONIES REVIVED AT COURT. — EXTRAVAGANT ALTERATIONS IN THE ARMY. — THE WATCH PARADE. — EXTENSIVE AND INJURIOUS CHANGES IN THE CIVIL DEPARTMENTS. — ABROGATION OF THE TITLE TO NOBILITY IN CERTAIN CLASSES. — RIGOROUS CENSORSHIP, AND PROSCRIPTION OF PRINTING. — RESTRICTIONS ON EDUCATION. — SUSPENSION OF THE MILITARY LEVY AGAINST FRANCE, AND OF THE TREATY OF SUBSIDY WHICH HAD BEEN BEGUN BY CATHERINE. — DISASTROUS EXPERIMENTS ON THE MONETARY SYSTEM. — LAVISH EXPENDITURE OF PAUL. — HE CARRIES MILITARY DISCIPLINE TO EXCESS. — THE GRAND DUKE ALEXANDER TESTS THE VIGILANCE OF THE TROOPS. — IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EMPEROR'S DESPOTISM. — THE PEOPLE ARE STRUCK WITH PANIC. — ST. PETERSBURG IS DESERTED. — SOME SLIGHT TRAITS OF GOODNESS IN THE CHARACTER OF PAUL. — OUTLINE OF THE LAW OF THE SUCCESSION.

THE circumstances under which Paul ascended the throne were inauspicious to the developement of those qualities in the sovereign which were necessary to the purification of the national character. If the example of Catherine's vices had penetrated to the core of society, corrupting the people inwards, until it reached the most sacred privacies of domestic life, it was unlikely that a prince who had been the victim of her guilty ambition would be sufficiently dispassionate in his views to administer the government with the discretion and firm-

ness it demanded at this crisis. It was rather to be expected that, goaded by contumely and oppression, he would take revenge upon the people for the deep injuries he had endured at the hands of the empress.

The education of Paul was in every way unfitted for one who was destined to inherit the sceptre of a great empire. From the first he had been regarded with feelings of inexplicable aversion by his imperious mother. In his youth, he evinced a strong desire for the cultivation of the sciences, and a disposition capable of receiving the noblest and most amiable impressions ; but these germs of character were early blighted by the cruelty of Catherine, who was not satisfied with depriving him of the honours and emoluments to which he was entitled by his birth, but carried her hatred so far as to banish him from her presence, and exclude him from all participation in, or knowledge of, public affairs. While her favourites, some of whom were younger than the prince, basked in the sunshine of the court, accumulating enormous fortunes, Paul lived in solitude, exposed to every kind of humiliation, surrounded by spies, and often in want of the necessaries of life. Nor did her persecution terminate here.

The grand duke Paul was married, in 1773, to a princess of the house of Hesse-Darmstadt, who died under an operation in 1776. The prince did not long remain a widower, but, on the 13th of October in the same year, espoused the princess Maria of Würtemberg, niece of Frederick the Great. The issue of this marriage afforded Catherine a fresh and still more unnatural means of inflicting torture upon her son. She compelled the princess to leave her husband on every occasion of her accouchement, taking charge of the children herself, and depriving both the father and the mother of all influence in their education, or authority over their conduct. She thus attempted to alienate the affections of the offspring from their parents, with a view to set aside the succession of Paul altogether (notwithstanding that she acknowledged him as her heir in a manifesto pub-

lished at her coronation*), and to bequeath the throne to his son, the grand duke Alexander. She undertook the charge of the young prince's education, composing for his use a book of moral allegorical stories, as a testimony of her regard, and leaving no arts untried to fix upon him the attachment of the nation. When the period of his tutelage had expired, she established him in a separate court, where, in the society of his wife, of the flatterers appointed about his person, or of the empress, his time was spent in the indulgence of effeminate luxury, which, had not there been some goodness in his heart, must have stifled in him the voice of nature. The suddenness of Catherine's death, however, prevented her from carrying her design into execution; and there is no doubt that, had she believed her dissolution was so close at hand, Paul would never have reached the throne. This severe and perfidious treatment continued for a period of thirty-five years; an ordeal which was not likely to qualify the prince for reigning with advantage to the people.

When these circumstances are taken into consideration, it will scarcely be a matter of surprise that many persons suspected that Paul was not the son of Catherine, but one of the children of Elizabeth and Razoumoffsky, or some other obscure favourite; a belief which was in some sort justified by the Tartar caste of Paul's figure, and to which the unscrupulous and capricious character of Elizabeth's amours gave some tone of probability. Accustomed as the Russians were to criminalities in high places, there were yet some amongst them who vindicated humanity by a doubt that the maternal heart could be so demoralised at the very spring of its holiest affections.

Yet, notwithstanding the injuries which had been thus heaped upon the prince, and such further aggravations upon justice as might have excused almost any act of rebellious resistance, Paul never forgot the respect that was due to the empress, both as his mother and his

* See Appendix, ii., 300.

sovereign. On many occasions, during the long term of his exile, there were not wanting advisers to point out to him the way by which she had arrived at the throne, and to suggest how easy and practicable it was to imitate her example. But he rejected the counsel that urged him to so unlawful and unrighteous an aggression, and submitted in silence to the humiliations of his position, until a fit of apoplexy carried off the tyrant, whom Voltaire, in a spirit of malicious *équivoque*, designated as "la Sémiramis du Nord."*

But we must not venture, without some reservation, to assign to Paul the great virtue of returning good for evil, and of preserving an implicit submission to the will of Catherine from motives of filial duty and political integrity alone. His subsequent life does not warrant the inference that the foundations of his character were laid in generous and exalted principles. The genius of Paul was not adapted for a conspiracy. In the depths of its dark nature despotism is always timid and indecisive. The conduct of Paul on the throne was that of a man destitute of courage, and resorting to extreme acts of tyranny for protection in the exercise of a power which he did not know how to use with justice and moderation. This was partly to be attributed to the habits of his previous life; but it will help to guide us to the true solution of that quiescence under injuries which some writers have hastily assumed as a proof of virtue. That Paul, quailing in his retirement, and daily apprehensive of fresh inflictions, was afraid to take any steps against

* It is not easy to determine which way Voltaire meant this expression to be taken. He generally applies to Catherine such epithets as the "grand" and "admirable;" yet his tragedy, founded upon the ancient traditions concerning the sovereign of Babylon, represents Semiramis as having murdered her husband, and usurped his throne. Which of the phases of her character did Voltaire mean to apply to Catherine? Or was it, as Rabbé supposes, in his "Résumé de l'Histoire de Russie," that "Voltaire avait caché la plus sanglante satire sous les apparences d'une ingénieuse flatterie?" Alison, in his History of the French Revolution, applies the same title to Catherine; which, caught up originally from Voltaire, without acknowledgment, has found its way into a great number of works, and may be expected at last to take root in the school-books, as a felicitous sobriquet for the empress of Russia. Such is the progress of brilliant historical witticisms, to the dissemination of which Voltaire has contributed more largely than any other writer in the world.

the empress, is, on the whole, quite as likely as that he was restrained from taking them by any loftier sentiments. At all events, he was swayed between the two considerations; and, as the worthier course lay on the side of safety, he may be presumed to have been determined in his choice by its prudence as much as by its propriety.

The very first measures of his reign proved that, however he had suppressed the bitterness engendered by his sufferings, he had not felt it the less deeply. His ascent to the throne was marked by an outbreak of retaliation. As if he were resolved to make retribution to himself for the past, he dedicated his whole thoughts to the subversion of the policy of Catherine. So far as it was possible to cast odium upon the proceedings of her reign, by undoing what she had accomplished, and arresting the progress of whatever she had begun, Paul omitted no means of testifying to the world the hatred in which he held her memory. The preliminary movement of the imperial revolution was opened in the court itself. His children, who had been separated from him by the empress, now for the first time enjoyed the paternal caresses; and, in the ardour of his desire to obliterate the recollection of Catherine's favours, by still more extravagant marks of affection, he gave to each of them the command of a regiment of the guards, and appointed the eldest military governor of St. Petersburg, a post of considerable importance. Intercourse with the more polished nations of Europe had rendered the abuse of royal patronage familiar at the court of Russia. Less than a century before, Peter the Great denounced the practice of conferring high places upon inexperienced individuals, and in his own person set the example of rendering service and merits the only passports to offices of responsibility: but such things had now ceased to excite surprise. Slight facts like these assist us even more emphatically than great events in tracing the European progress of the empire.

The first individual who paid homage to the new sovereign was his wife. She had been the partner and

the confidante of his misfortunes, and the nation was well pleased to find that he was not forgetful of her claims upon his gratitude. He assigned her a considerable revenue, and bestowed upon her children still farther marks of kindness. Upon the occasion of his proclamation as emperor, he caused his son Alexander also to be proclaimed as czarovitch, or heir presumptive to the throne. This ceremony was no sooner completed, than Paul entered at once upon his duties with a vigour that astonished the whole empire. It appeared that he had not wasted his leisure during his inglorious obscurity, but that he had occupied himself in preparing for the responsibility to which he was now called. Even so far back as 1788, he had drawn up an act to be promulgated at his coronation, in which, to avert the confusion that so frequently followed the demise of the sovereign, he regulated the future succession to the crown in his own family, assuming to himself a prerogative similar to that which was claimed for the first time by Peter the Great.

But, while he was resolved to adopt a course of policy directly opposed to that of his mother, he acted at first with great circumspection in reference to the persons by whom she had been surrounded, in order to disarm them of any hostility they might entertain against the extensive changes which he contemplated. The favourite whom he found in office he continued there, thanking him in complimentary terms for his fidelity to the empress, and expressing his hope that he would serve him with equal zeal. He also confirmed the ministers, and the chiefs of the departments, in their several posts, and even bestowed additional marks of favour upon the most influential. When he had thus secured in his interest the principal persons from whom resistance might be expected, he proceeded, without loss of time, to develop the views with which he entered upon the government.

The means to which he resorted to slight the memory of Catherine, without doing actual violence to public decorum, were calculated at once to strike the people

with surprise, and to surround his movements with popular interest. As the day appointed for the funeral of Catherine approached, Paul caused arrangements to be made for the disinterment of his father, that the funeral obsequies might be performed for both at the same time. For five and thirty years the utterance of the name of Peter III. had been prohibited in Russia. The body of that ill-fated monarch lay in the vaults of the convent of Alexander Nefsky, and Paul repaired thither in person to witness the ceremony of opening the coffin. Upon this occasion Paul is said to have been deeply affected; but, as the act was less a tribute of love to the memory of his father than a bitter reproach to the fame of his mother, we may be permitted to doubt the sincerity of his emotions. The coffin was conveyed, with extraordinary pomp and ostentation, to the palace, and, in a temple constructed expressly for the purpose, it was crowned by the side of his mother's dead body.* The reason assigned for this strange proceeding (for which there is, perhaps, but one parallel, in the case of Inez de Castro) was, that Peter III. had never been crowned. The utmost pains were taken to render this unusual rite still more impressive. The people were admitted to view the magnificent scene, and to kiss the coffin which contained the remains of the emperor; and, to enhance the effect, they were obliged to make a solemn genuflection before it, and to retire backwards from the presence until they reached the open air. When these honours were paid to the deceased, the corpse was conveyed to the citadel, where the remains of the Russian emperors were deposited. But this did not sufficiently satisfy the retribution desired by Paul: he compelled Alexius Orlof, one of the murderers of his father, a man of powerful stature, of indomitable courage, and of distinguished military genius, but capable of the most ferocious crimes, to walk in the procession following the coffin; thus, after a long term of

* Peter III. had never been crowned.

impunity, drawing down upon the regicide the public execrations of the multitude.

If Paul considered it necessary to punish in this way those who had conspired against his father, he was not less impressed with the propriety of rewarding those who had been faithful to him. He instituted a strict search after the officers who were formerly attached to the person of the late emperor, and who, after the period of his assassination, had retired for safety into private life. One of these, the baron Sternberg, a very old man, who had long renounced all interest in the affairs of state, was at once made general in chief, and invested with the riband of Saint Alexander. Several other officers were recalled to court, and treated with marked consideration.

The motives which induced Paul to exhibit so much anxiety on this subject were variously stated. By some it was said to spring from an affectation of filial piety, which he put on to ingratiate himself with his subjects; by others, it was regarded as a politic stroke to silence the suspicions that attached to his birth; while a still greater number more reasonably concluded that he had no other object in view than to cast opprobrium on the grave of the empress, by restoring to its place of melancholy dignity the corpse of the husband whom she sacrificed to her criminal ambition. The last motive appears to have been the true one.

The opinion which was generally entertained of Paul's character, founded upon the uselessness, and, as far as it was publicly known, the moroseness, of his past life, now began rapidly to give way to more favourable sentiments. His early measures discovered so wise a tendency, so much justice and propriety, that he acquired in a few days an extraordinary ascendancy over the affections of his subjects. His conduct at this period fully justified the confidence it produced. His first ukase announced to the people the glad tidings of a pacific policy; which, after the ruinous expenditure of the last reign, the safety of the empire now imperatively

demand. Catherine, a short time before her death, had ordered a levy of recruits, in the proportion of one peasant in every hundred; and this levy Paul at once suspended and annulled. Independently of the congratulations with which this ukase was received amongst the great bulk of the lower classes, it was also accepted as a boon by the nobility, whose immediate interests would have suffered by the intended conscription. But the changes which Paul effected in the guards—the military despots of the court—were still more bold and unexpected. The dangerous power of that *imperium in imperio* (which had been exhibited with such fatal results on many occasions and on none more emphatically than in the deposition of Peter III.), determined Paul to take a signal step in reference to them, a step almost equivalent to their annihilation. He had a passion for rigorous discipline, that had already manifested itself in a variety of ways, especially in the selection of the severest officers for promotion; and he came to the throne prepared with a complete code of military regulations, which he had previously put into execution at Gatshina and Pavlofsky, and which he now applied to the empire at large. The guards had long held a position in the capital which kept even the sovereign in a state of comparative fear. They were always the ring-leaders, if not the originators, of the revolutions against the throne; and, whenever any acts of conspiracy or treason were contemplated by disaffected or disappointed ministers, that treacherous body was invariably counted upon, as being available to such ends. Paul, aware of the power which they possessed, perceived the difficulty, as well as the peril, of openly disbanding them, and casting loose upon society so many ferocious and revengeful spirits. He therefore incorporated into the different regiments of guards the battalions that had served under him at Gatshina, promoting the officers two or three steps, and dispersing them so freely through the corps of St. Petersburg, as to absorb by numbers the influence of the old companies. This proceeding had the

double effect of depriving the guards of the means of doing mischief by combination, and of advancing, at the same time, his own friends to such appointments of distinction (a captaincy in the guards gave the rank of colonel in the army, and, in particular cases, of brigadier) as to insure to him their support on all future occasions. The consequences of such an innovation were easily foreseen. The veteran officers of the guards, the greater number of whom were connected with the first families, felt themselves deeply aggrieved by finding juniors of plebeian extraction, and who but a short time before had served in the ranks, suddenly raised over their heads. Those who could afford to retire from the army threw up their commissions with indignation, loudly complaining of the novel and harassing discipline which their new commanders unrelentingly enforced; and those whose private resources would not enable them to act with such determination, sullenly submitted to the necessity, affecting to regard as the heaviest trial of all the abandonment of their gay and costly uniform, for the more sombre accoutrements of the Gatshina troops, which formed one of the features of Paul's reforms.

Had the emperor rested here, he would have effectually accomplished the object at which he aimed; but, offended, and perhaps alarmed, at the withdrawal of several hundred officers into private life, carrying with them an avowed ill-will against the government, he proceeded to extremities on the instant—such extremities as were usual, on the weakest pretences, when a Russian emperor happened to be displeased. In this respect, Paul unfortunately too early evinced a disposition to imitate the worst of his predecessors. He proceeded in person to the barracks, and, flattering those who yet remained by a variety of encouraging promises, he declared his determination to exclude from all civil or military employment every officer who had retired, or who should throw up his commission. This determination he followed up by an order, commanding all

officers or subalterns who had retired, or who might subsequently retire, to leave St. Petersburg within four and twenty hours, and repair without loss of time to their homes. This order contained two distinct clauses: 1. that the retiring officers should leave St. Petersburg; 2. that they should repair to their homes. Now, as the families of several of these persons resided in St. Petersburg, which was consequently their homes, it was impossible for those who were thus circumstanced to obey both clauses. If they followed the former injunction, they must have violated the latter; and if they availed themselves of the latter, it could only be by openly disobeying the former. It was a risk either way, and their pride determined them to brave the emperor in the face of the court, by remaining in the capital. Foiled in his plans by the inconsistency of his own order, Paul no sooner discovered the advantage that had been taken of his mistake, than he rescinded the latter clause, and issued an imperative command that the recusants should quit St. Petersburg at once. Accordingly, those who had remained were forced out of their beds, and driven outside the gates, some without any clothing, and all of them without any provision for the future. In this condition several perished of cold and want in the neighbourhood where they were forced to linger for help.

One of the grand objects of Paul's ambition, when he ascended the throne, was to reform and gain over the army, as we shall see in the extraordinary diligence he exhibited upon points of the minutest detail; but this act of unnecessary cruelty to the guards, obnoxious as they were to the rest of the troops, was in the last degree unfavourable to his designs. To show, however, how nearly he secured popularity, how suddenly and completely he cast it away, how capricious and unstable were his proceedings, and how slightly he was guided by principles in any thing he did, it will be requisite to enumerate some of the regulations he adopted immediately on his accession. The mixture of good and

evil, of folly and generosity, in these measures, will abundantly attest the weakness and incertitude of his character.

Kosciusko, the unfortunate Polish patriot, who, with several of his brave companions, was made prisoner of war by Catherine, still lay in St. Petersburg, suffering from his wounds and his misfortunes, and wearing out his life in exile. Consideration for his unhappy circumstances had procured some mitigation of the rigours of his imprisonment; and, while his fellow-prisoners were closely confined at Schlussemburg, or in the fortress of the capital, he was permitted to live at the house of count Anhalt, where he had apartments assigned to his use, and an officer, who lived with him, appointed as his guard. Paul released all the Poles from their dungeons; and, as an additional mark of graciousness, visited Kosciusko in person to announce his liberation. Kosciusko, his head still wrapped in bandages, and his person attenuated by grief and sickness, was removed to the palace, where he was presented to the empress. Paul offered him a location in Russia, with a large gift of peasants; but Kosciusko declined it, preferring to accept a sufficient sum of money to enable him to transport himself to America for the remnant of his life.* The noble spirit which Paul manifested on this occasion won the affections of the people, who saw in it, not the obstinate self-will of the son rising up against the decrees of a mother he detested, but a voluntary act of generosity, which was accepted as a happy omen of the future.

The caprices of Paul towards the ministers and other officers about the court showed that favours and punishments were dispensed by him with equal indifference. The courtiers, who, confirmed in their appointments in the first instance, believed themselves to be secure of the

* It has been said, but not upon any authority that renders it necessary to discuss the question, that Kosciusko was *pensioned* by the Russian government. We have stated the facts exactly as they occurred. When Poland was lost, Kosciusko was liberated under a new reign, and a compensation made to him for the injuries he had suffered.

imperial protection, were in a few days disgraced. One of the most remarkable instances was that of Plato * Zubof, the favourite of Catherine, who was one of the first persons recognised by Paul, and re-established in his post in the palace. Notwithstanding the voluntary assurances he gave him on that occasion, Paul, a few days afterwards, sealed up his office, and dismissed him and his secretaries from the court with contumely. This proceeding would have been just in itself, had it not involved a direct violation of the unexpected pledge of the emperor to a man who, having corrupted at the fountain head the administration of the public affairs, deserved the severest punishment which could have been inflicted upon him. The whole bearing of Paul to this great delinquent was remarkable for weakness and duplicity. Zubof had for a long time literally governed Russia. He made war in Persia to enrich himself, and for the sake of giving his brother a lucrative command, never condescending to furnish reports of the progress and movements of the army to the college of war; so that, when it afterwards became necessary to make a fresh distribution of the available military force, considerable difficulty was experienced in discovering where the different regiments were stationed, or in what condition they were likely to be found. † Totally ignorant of the routine of public business, he yet, through his instruments, gradually absorbed all its emoluments to himself; he heaped enormous wealth upon his family; and elevated his father to the office of a judge, which he adroitly turned to account by buying up all the old causes in the court, or forcing the parties to abandon them, and then deciding every case in his own favour. A man

* Plato Zubof was the last favourite of Catherine, which led to the pun, that the empress had ended with Platonic love. — *Mémoires Secrets*, &c.

† An extraordinary fact is recorded in illustration of the irregularity and want of information respecting the operations and changes of the army that prevailed in Russia at this period. Officers, who were ordered to rejoin their corps, frequently knew not where to find them; and on one occasion, a Frenchman, who solicited the appointment of commandant of some remote place, where he could live cheaply with his family, was ordered to repair to fort Peter and Paul, the office of commandant of which was then stated to be vacant. On reaching the place, he found that it was a desert, the fort having been destroyed by Pugatscheff twenty years before!

who had committed such acts as these, who had trafficked so largely in the advantages of the position to which the imbecility of the empress had advanced him, and who had exercised the most haughty tyranny over the oldest generals and counsellors of the empire, ought to have been degraded at once : but Paul was afraid to act with decision until he felt himself safe on the throne. A few months before, he was amongst those who had bowed before the favourite ; and even upon his accession he treated him with the most marked respect, bestowing upon his brother the first order of the empire, and leaving no means unemployed of testifying to the favourite the personal esteem in which he held him. But this disposition was of very short continuance. Having determined to deprive him of his chancery, he directed the grand duke Constantine, previously one of Zubof's most servile flatterers, to carry his will into effect, as minister of police ; a commission which Constantine executed with a coarseness and ferocity that were natural to him, but needless to the occasion. Zubof's secretaries were driven into banishment, along with the train of his dependants : and the officers of his suite were dispersed in different corps throughout the empire. Thirty offices which he held in the state were at once taken from him ; but, to reduce, apparently, the violence of his fall, he was permitted to retire to a mansion which was provided for him in the capital. He was not suffered, however, to remain there long, but was soon afterwards ordered to leave Russia. He retired to Germany, from whence he was subsequently recalled, in consequence of a design he contemplated of carrying off one of the princesses of Courland by force. Had this treatment of Zubof been founded in a desire to punish him for his offences, and to extirpate, by so striking an example, the corruptions of which he was the mainspring, it ought to be recorded as an act honourable to the character of the emperor ; but it was the offspring of that resentment with which he regarded every person who had been attached to his mother. He aimed, in the

destruction of Zubof, not at the criminal who had abused his trust, but at the parasite and confidant of the empress. He flattered him on the first day, only to throw him off his guard ; if he had been actuated by more virtuous motives, he never would have compromised the dignity of justice, either by affecting at one moment to load him with caresses, or by pursuing him with vengeance at another. Several instances of similar insincerity might be adduced. Tersky, who held a post of responsibility in the senate, and who openly sold its awards to the highest bidder, was knighted by Paul upon his accession, and received a large grant of lands which were said to have been promised him by the empress: the next day he was exiled. Samoïlof, the attorney-general, who was continued in his office, with a present of 4000 peasants, was, in a few days afterwards, put under arrest, and his officers committed to the fortress. It was, in fact, impossible to account for the singular actions of Paul, after the first day of his reign had passed over.

Within a single week, he issued a greater variety of frivolous, absurd, and contradictory regulations, than, perhaps, had ever before occupied the attention of the ruler of a great nation. His mind seemed to be wholly engrossed by the consideration of the most inconsequential trifles: badges, plumes, buttons, ribands, the shape of a hat, the colour of a feather (observes a contemporary writer), the altitude of a grenadier's cap, boots, spatterdashes, cockades, queues, and sword-belts were the affairs of state, that absorbed his astonishing activity. He prohibited the use of round hats, and even authorised the police and the populace to tear them off the heads of those who happened to wear them. The most disgraceful scenes followed this preposterous enactment; and it was not until an English merchant had been assaulted in this way, which produced a spirited remonstrance from sir Charles Whitworth, the English minister, that the order was modified, by the exemption of foreigners from its operation. Even in this form it subjected

strangers to the most disagreeable consequences ; as, although they were not grossly insulted, as before, they were conducted into the presence of the police, to have their native country ascertained. The singular aversion which Paul entertained against round hats was by no means a sudden caprice. He had always proscribed them at Pavlofsky, when he was grand duke ; and to such an extent did he carry his antipathy to the custom of wearing them, that, shortly after he issued his imperial edict against them, he ordered the Sardinian chargé d'affaires to quit St. Petersburg within twenty-four hours, in consequence of a piece of pleasantry, said to have been uttered by that minister, that similar trifles had, on many occasions, nearly brought about political revolutions in Italy.

As we have already observed, Paul's domestic alterations are to be regarded as having their origin, in a great measure, in his determination to subvert every custom and institution that had been encouraged by his mother ; and it is, perhaps, to this blind prejudice that we ought to refer the ridiculous actions which he committed, at a juncture so important to himself and to the empire. The diffusive spirit of Catherine, whatever excesses it might have precipitated in some respects, had, at all events, an improving tendency, in so far as the social habits of the court and the people were concerned. Paul at once set himself about the abrogation of all these refinements. In the early and more barbarous times of the empire, it had been the slavish custom of the Russians, from the serf up to the highest boyard, to stop, whether riding or walking, whenever the emperor or any of the members of his family approached, and make an humble prostration before the earthly deity on the bare ground. Peter the Great was so indignant at this degradation of his subjects, that he ordered every person to be caned who made such an obeisance, and frequently inflicted the rod upon them himself. Catherine had entirely abolished the usage. Paul revived it in all its original force, and rendered the etiquette

within the palace, even more servile than ever it had been at any former period. He compelled those who presented themselves before him to make the floor resound with the stroke of their knee as they knelt, and to kiss his hand so boisterously, that the noise of the salute should be plainly heard all over the apartment. When foreigners visited any of the palaces or imperial gardens, he compelled them to remain uncovered, as if the emperor were present ; thus arrogating to his own residences the ceremonials that are ordinarily observed only in the temples of religion. Any neglect of these disgraceful ceremonials was treated as a most serious crime.* He also strictly enjoined the adoption of the German mode of harnessing horses, allowing only one fortnight for the preparations that were necessary to carry this change into operation ; and directing the police, after that period, to cut the traces of every carriage that they should find harnessed in the old fashion. The coachmen were also compelled to dress in the German fashion, which, had it really been more convenient, or even more graceful, than the Russian costume, might have been admitted without much remonstrance ; but its extravagance, as well as the reluctance of the people, helped to bring it into ridicule. The Russians could not be prevailed upon to tie a false tail to their hair, or to abandon their beards and kaftans ; and Paul, discovering at last that it was impossible to force this monstrous folly upon his subjects, relaxed his commands into a request that the people, if they desired to merit his favour, would dress in the manner of the Germans.

Another regulation, issued at this period, commanded all persons in trade to obliterate the word *magazin* from the fronts of their houses, and to substitute in its place the word *lavka* (shop). The reason assigned for this

* A general officer, whose coachman did not perceive the emperor riding past on horseback, and omitted, therefore, to draw up for his master to alight, was immediately put under arrest ; and the prince George Gallitzin, chamberlain to the court, was also arrested for making his genuflection and his salute too carelessly. Such were the objects that engrossed the eager attention of this imperial trifler.

alteration was, that the emperor alone could have magazines, and that tradesmen ought to publish their real occupations in the plainest language: but the secret motive was the invincible prejudice which Paul entertained towards every thing that was derived from France—the only feeling he possessed in common with his mother. It was from this aversion to the spirit of independence, which was at that time breaking out amongst the French people, that he issued also two ukases, prohibiting the academy from employing the word *revolution*, when they were speaking of the heavenly bodies; and enjoining the actors to use the word *permission*, instead of *liberty*, in the bills of the theatres. Over such petty conceits did the shallow Paul fret himself in the first stages of his capricious rule.

But his most absorbing pursuit was that of introducing changes into the army. Much as had been done by Potemkin for the military force of Russia, it still required the most vigilant revision, in consequence of the disorders and corruption which the ascendancy of subsequent favourites had introduced. The soldiers had fallen off in their discipline; their principles of unity and obedience were shattered; and, as their pay had ceased to be remitted with punctuality, they were cast upon such resources, at a distance from the capital, as lawless and compulsive circumstances suggested. The field of reform that lay before the emperor in this department was wide and inviting: the condition of the common soldiers demanded extensive improvements; that of the officers was no less deplorable; and the restoration of order throughout the whole body was a task worthy of a great military genius. Unfortunately, however, Paul took a microscopic view of this important subject, as he did of every other; and, suffering essentials to be neglected in his scrupulous regard for insignificant details, he addressed himself with indefatigable and surprising earnestness to such points of form as harassed and discontented the soldiers, and drew down upon him the general ridicule of the empire. From the very morning he ascended

the throne, his new regulations began to take effect ; and the palace and its court-yards were thrown into the utmost confusion, in the first attempts to carry his frivolous instructions into operation. They resembled, says an eyewitness, a place taken by assault by foreign troops, so different was the dress and manner of the new soldiers who mounted guard, from that of those who preceded them the day before. This eccentricity in the posting of the guards afforded full employment to the mornings of the emperor. For three or four hours every day, before he would attend to any other business, he occupied himself in manœuvring the soldiers, and teaching them to mount guard after a fashion of his own, which, according to all contemporary authority, had at the least the merit of being as original as it was singular. This was the first of all his operations. His *wacht-parade*, (guard-parade) was the centre of his whole military system. He had tried it with success when he was grand duke, and when he had no authority to consult but his own will, and no opinion to regard beyond the very limited circle of his own staff. He believed that it would apply with equal certainty in its results to the imperial army ; and that single idea so engrossed his attention, that he almost abandoned all other objects, that he might assiduously dedicate himself to this strange and fruitless design. So intent was he upon the morning exercise, that he forbade any one to approach him with a petition, or upon business of any kind, while he was thus engaged ; and, in order to give facility to those who had requests to prefer, and to deprive them of all excuse for disturbing him during those hours, he established a sort of office on the stairs of the palace, in which all letters were to be deposited, promising to read them in due time, and furnish the necessary answers.*

* During the reign of Catherine, any person who presented or forwarded a petition to the sovereign was imprisoned. And here, again, we find Paul adopting an opposite course. But it evidently did not arise from that love of justice, and strict watchfulness of the public interests, which made Frederick of Prussia freely receive and regularly reply to the communications of his subjects. Paul soon became wearied of punctuality in such

The change of costume which he forced upon the soldiers rendered this guard-parade still more vexatious and disagreeable. The previous dress of the Russians was remarkable for its simplicity, and its adaptation to the climate of the country. It consisted solely of two garments,—a red and green jacket, which was fastened by a girdle within the folds of the loose *charrari*, or red pantaloons, terminating in boots; which were not only put on with facility, but admitted of such additions underneath as protected the soldier from the inclemency of the atmosphere, without interfering with the external uniformity of his appearance. For this accustomed and appropriate dress, Paul substituted the fantastic uniform of the German troops; requiring the soldiers to clot their hair with powder and pomatum, to wear long gaiters with a multitude of buttons, and a false tail; all of which arrangements for the day consumed as much time as Peter the Great would have required to bring his army into a state of preparation for the field. The indignation of the veteran marshal Suwarrow, the idol of the Russian army, when he was called upon to establish these novelties, receiving, at the same time, little sticks moulded into models of tails and side curls for the army to dress by, vented itself in a saying that obtained immediate currency, and ultimately led to his dismissal from the service. “Hair-powder,” said Suwarrow, “is not gunpowder, curls are not cannons, and tails are not bayonets.”* In the open court, on the coldest mornings, Paul was to be found punctually at his post, attired in a plain deep green uniform, huge boots, and a vast hat. There he dispensed punishments

matters, and at last delegated the answers to officers about his person, who, after the old fashion, either did not transmit answers at all, or traded upon them.

* This sarcasm of Suwarrow's was turned into a song by the Russian soldiers, and contributed, by the force and truth of the ridicule, to bring the new regulations more effectually into contempt than, perhaps, any more serious argument could have done. The words run thus in the Russ:—

C'kasa nié kaset,
C'boucli nié palit,
C'poudri nié strélat.

and rewards, and drilled his troops into automata ; there his officers were presented to him, and compelled to stand bare headed, exposed to the most inclement weather. He possessed, in an extraordinary degree, the power of enduring cold, and he forced the old generals to divest themselves of their warm clothing, and assemble round him on those occasions, believing that he was thereby promoting the hardihood and improvement of his soldiers.

He was not less restless in his desire to introduce changes into the civil departments, apparently for no other reason than to make them different from what they had been in the previous reign. These changes were capricious and unreasonable in the last degree. All the offices for the administration of fiscal affairs, and the tribunals of justice, underwent a complete revolution ; and the seats of the different provincial governments were changed, some of them, in name, being altogether abolished. The confusion and misery produced by these sudden movements were very widely felt. Upwards of 20,000 persons holding responsible appointments were thrown out of employment. The rage for alteration extended itself over every branch of the public service, and penetrated even to the very basis of the social system. By one ukase (the ultimate operation of which it is more than likely Paul did not foresee), he broke up the existing classes into which the people were divided, and established a novel element in society, which, if despotism had not been strong enough in Russia to crush at all times the growth of opinion, must have finally led to the recognition and establishment of civil liberty in that great empire. Formerly, the population had been emphatically separated into two distinct bodies: the nobility on the one hand, who exercised a species of barbarous and feudal authority, subservient only to the will of the emperor ; and the slaves on the other hand, who held no privileges whatever, not even the privilege of complaint. The ascent to nobility was through a variety of channels, chiefly by corruption and favour-

itism, and also by virtue of military rank and civil precedence. These latter dignities Paul abrogated.* Thus a third class was instantly created,—a middle order, which, possessed of wealth and the advantages of education, were repulsed from the exclusive circle of the aristocracy, and cast back upon the community below them. If ever a revolution of a popular character, therefore, were to take place in Russia, it would spring from the sympathies which were by this means generated between the middle class and the slaves; the former, in a spirit of retaliation, endeavouring to elevate the latter, and both combining against the nobility. But the overawing power of the throne, embodied in the absolute authority of the emperor, who may at any moment revoke or reconstruct, give or take away, the rights of his subjects, which are always dependent upon his will, and not upon any principles inherent to the constitution, render the prospect of such a struggle purely chimerical. Russia is, in fact, governed by ukases; and all orders in the country, as well as all its laws and institutes, exist solely by the breath of the

* We are led to infer, by other acts of Paul's, that this measure was intended as a mark of favour to the nobility, the object of which was to attach them still more closely to him, at the expense of the attachment of the people. Thus, he distributed the Polish vassals of the empire among the nobles, instead of annexing them to the domains of the crown, increasing by that means the feudal power of his own creatures, and exposing the serfs to the worst species of tyranny. This system has been subsequently acted upon with undiminished severity. Even so lately as November, 1837, measures of confiscation, deriving their slender pretext from an extinguished revolution, were decreed, and several Polish estates were sequestered and given to Russians. But in that instance a selection was previously made from the peasants of both sexes, living on the land, for the purpose of draughting the best amongst them into the military colonies. The conduct of the young king of Prussia to his Polish subjects afforded a remarkable contrast to that of Paul. After a tour in Poland, during which he witnessed the ignominious treatment the people suffered at the hands of the local authorities, he issued instructions for the improvement of the national condition, and the punishment of all abuses of power. The following sentence occurs in a letter addressed by him, on that occasion, to two of his ministers: it is worthy of being held in remembrance by every monarch in Europe:—"These miserable beings are degradingly distinguished by the dirtiness of their houses and clothes, but still more by their cringing manners, and a humility beyond bounds. *In my eyes, and in those of the law, the lowest of my subjects possesses the dignity of a man.* The people of these new provinces are still ignorant of this dignity, for which they are indebted to the Prussian sceptre; *because the inferior officers of government are ignorant of their duty, and abuse their authority.*" — *Jahrbücher der Preussischen Monarchie*, January, 1799.

supreme and irresponsible sovereign. The whole empire, throughout its most minute ramifications, may be regarded as the most perfect example of arbitrary government that has ever subsisted in the world. So comprehensive and searching has been its despotism, that even if political freedom were granted to the people, they would be incapable of turning it to advantage: they have been kept in such a state of vassalage, that they are literally ignorant of the full meaning of liberty: they understand it to mean nothing more than exemption from labour, and permission to leave the glebe to which they are confined, and wander vagrantly, like loosened cattle, into other pastures. Domestic servitude has become second nature to them, and their notions of a happier mode of existence do not extend beyond a release from immediate oppression.

In another ukase, Paul proscribed the use of printing presses, except under certain regulations, which established a censorship of the most rigorous kind. This ordinance allowed only three presses to be employed, which were to be confined to the printing of his own ukases, of books for the church, and of such works as should be approved of by the government, the schools, and the heads of the church. He subsequently forbade the importation of foreign catalogues, so that the people should not be made acquainted even with the progress of literature and philosophy in other countries; and required that the imperial permission should be acknowledged on the face of every volume that passed through the censorship, in order that every body might be aware that it came to them by the express sanction of the authorities. All other works were rigidly prohibited. In any other country, such an ordinance would have produced results the very contrary of those which were meditated by Paul. Opinion, stopped at one vent, would have found expression through fresh channels, forcing its way against all impediments: but in Russia a reaction of this description must inevitably be slow and imperfect, and feeble in its influence.

In connection with the subject of books and education, he established other regulations, that were equally harassing and tyrannical. He prohibited the admission of French newspapers into Russia; and every person who received a newspaper or book of any kind, by post or otherwise, was compelled to carry it immediately to the committee appointed to control the press. He also forbade all his subjects, but especially those of Livonia and Courland, who were more in want of the means of instruction than those of any of the other provinces, to send their children into Germany to be educated, upon the pretext that dangerous principles were inculcated in that country. He further recalled, on penalty of confiscation, all persons who happened to be studying in foreign universities; and rendered null and void the appointment of all foreigners in the judicial or ecclesiastical departments. Another extraordinary order he issued had for its object to enforce the attendance of all strangers resident in Russia at their several places of worship, which they were compelled to obey under heavy penalties. The Roman catholics were required to confess; when they were granted cards of absolution, which exempted them from further persecution. The sale of these cards brought a handsome revenue to the priesthood. Such fretful ukases as these could hardly have proceeded from any sovereign except one who, like Paul, could think it worth while to legislate on pantaloons and lapelled waistcoats.*

But, notwithstanding all these unwise and vexatious regulations, Paul passed some measures, in the outset of his career, that were received with universal applause, and that were admirably adapted to retrieve the empire from the misfortunes which the continuous prodigality of Catherine, and the prejudices of the last years of her reign, had produced. The hostility of the empress against France tempted her into a scheme fraught with the most serious consequences. She resolved to declare

* Hotel-keepers were imperatively required to inform against every person who entered their houses with pantaloons, round hats, or lapelled waistcoats.

war directly against France; and, as a secondary means of effecting her design more successfully, she determined to send succours to Germany, and to open an attack upon the king of Prussia, with a view to drive him back to the Rhine, and force him to return to the coalition. For this purpose, she laid the seeds of conspiracies in Prussia, Dantzic, and Silesia, and projected a variety of schemes to embarrass the operations of Prussia. But it was necessary to strengthen her effective military force, in order to enable her to enter upon this great plan; and she accordingly issued orders for raising a levy of nearly 100,000 recruits. Paul at once superseded this order, and suspended the levy; a measure that was gratefully received by a people who yearned for repose. He also broke off a treaty of subsidy which was in progress with England, avowedly on a point of pride, that Russia might not be humiliated into the condition of a petty state, receiving the pay of another nation.*

But, on all accounts, the most important changes which Paul effected were in the department of the finances. Had he persevered as he began, and directed his attention solely to the welfare of his subjects, yielding occasionally to the pressure of circumstances, instead of trying to control the currency by the same arbitrary means that he would discipline a regiment, he might have conferred signal benefits upon the empire. But, unfortunately, his faith in the omnipotence of the imperial ukase was too bigoted to permit him to consult public necessity with the requisite patience; and, when the first effort of reform was expended, he relapsed into that wilfulness, which was destined to mar his best intentions, and to convert his opportunities of utility into means of doing mischief.

We have seen that one of the last measures of Catherine's reign was the adulteration of the national coin. Several millions of this fraudulent money were

* It was said, however, that, in the face of this declaration, Paul afterwards received subsidies from England in English goods, which he sold on his own account. The obvious consequence of acting extensively on this plan would be ultimately to drain Russia of its specie.

ready to be issued upon the accession of Paul. He at once suspended its fabrication, and exerted himself strenuously to restore the assignats to credit; beginning, very wisely, by diminishing their quantity. The determination he exhibited on this subject, the reductions he actually made in the lavish expenditure of the court, the punishments he pronounced against every person in authority who should commit any depredations in the finances, and the inclination he manifested to establish a system of general economy, produced a feeling of popular confidence, that was at first attended with the happiest results. The assignats, which had rapidly fallen in value, now rose from ten to fifteen per cent.; and the expectations of the people were naturally excited to the utmost. They believed that the will of the sovereign was sufficient to restore health to the circulation; and, having been long accustomed to regard his ordinances as possessing divine authority, the very declaration of his desire to promote frugality, and to place the currency upon a more permanent foundation, was sufficient to inspire them with a full reliance on whatever he proposed. That Paul had the same notion of his omnipotence is clear enough, from the first experiment he made on the delicate machinery of the currency. He issued an order that the paper ruble should pass at the same value as the ruble in silver, and attempted to enforce it by such measures of police as, elsewhere, would have precipitated a revolution. The duke Constantine was employed, *incog.*, to visit the shops of the traders to exchange paper money for specie, for the purpose of entrapping them into a violation of the emperor's order; and every person who was thus convicted of jobbing in money was denounced, severely punished, and his shop shut up. The ignorance of the people upon all questions of finance enabled Paul, for a time, to prosecute his preposterous remedies with impunity, and even to deceive his subjects into the belief that he was adopting the wisest and most beneficial measures for the restoration of the public credit. Such a delu-

sion, however, could not last long; and even the theatrical expedient of burning publicly assignats, to the value of 6,000,000, failed of the desired effect. This ceremony was performed in the presence of Paul, with great solemnity; the prince Kurakin presenting the ashes of the confiscated paper, with commendable gravity, to the emperor, while the assembled multitude rent the air with shouts of joy. But it soon became known that this conflagration brought no relief to the community, the assignats which were thus destroyed not forming any part of the quantity that had been sent into circulation, but being a remnant of the stock that had been privately prepared by Catherine, and which she intended to use as her necessities might require. The detection of the imposition completely unveiled the hollowness of the emperor's projects, and exposed him at once to the imputation, not merely of trifling with the exigencies of the country, but of insincerity in his desire to remedy them. It was necessary that something should be done; that some effort should be made to recover the popularity of the paper currency, or to substitute in its stead a more solid medium of circulation. For the solution of the difficulty, the emperor submitted the whole case to the committee of finance, who were instructed to make such proposals, after due consideration, as should appear to them most likely to effect the object in view. But the committee of finance were no less unskilled in their own particular department than Paul himself; and, after investigating the question with such knowledge as they could bring to it, they came to the conclusion that the safest course would be to put an increase of specie into circulation. Of the soundness, as well as obviousness, of this decision there could be no doubt: but it involved a difficulty still greater than any that had previously been encountered: — where was the specie to be procured?

The mines, as we have already shown, had failed through gross mismanagement, and the ridiculous alternative of converting plate and personal ornaments of

the precious metals into money was insufficient to supply the requisite quantity. In this extremity, a new plan was struck out, by which it was hoped a sufficient amount of gold and silver would be obtained to answer the proposed end. A tariff was issued, by which a certain duty was laid upon all merchandise, whether imported or exported (the ports of Riga and Courland alone excepted); and it was further required that this duty should be paid in foreign money—dollars and Dutch ducats; while, to enhance the extent of the levy, those pieces were nominally rated below their accepted and real value,—a mere fiction in words, to disguise the excessive oppression of the impost. The intention of this scheme was to recoin the foreign money thus procured into imperials and rubles, and send it back into circulation. But the evils which the operation of this extraordinary project could not fail to inflict upon the commercial community, and through them, upon the population at large, entirely escaped the foresight of the emperor and his advisers, or, perhaps, was regarded by them with indifference, provided the immediate pressure could be, however slightly, removed. The inevitable consequence of the tariff was, that, while on the one hand a supply of specie was gathered in to assist the circulation, mercantile disasters followed on the other, creating greater difficulties than the partial enlargement of the currency could overcome. The merchant, in order to be enabled to clear his goods at the custom-house, was compelled to purchase dollars and ducats, which, of course, rose in price as his demand for them increased; and he was obliged to pay them to the government at a loss of about one third upon what they had cost him. The only remedy he had was to place an exorbitant price upon his goods, and to have recourse to smuggling, for which the venality of the officers, and the immense extent of the frontiers, afforded him ample facilities. The revenue, therefore, suffered in one direction, by this means, almost in an equal proportion to the temporary advantages it gained in another by

the new tax ; and, during this struggle between the imperial theory for sustaining the monetary system, and the practical resistance of the mercantile classes, the assignats, to protect the credit of which the tax had been established, fell down rapidly to the same state of depression in which the emperor found them upon his accession.

The commerce of Russia felt the ruinous consequences of the new duty throughout all its branches. Being unable to purchase foreign goods with specie, the merchants possessed no other means of effecting transactions with other countries except by having recourse to the assignats, or by an exchange of productions. The former was too great a sacrifice, for the loss on the assignats was so considerable as to absorb any gain that might possibly accrue upon ordinary dealings ; and the merchants accordingly carried on their business by barter. This mode of conducting their affairs was highly injurious to the general prosperity, since it gave to exportation all the disadvantages of importation, and always struck the balance of trade against the Russians.

This first experiment of the finance committee being found to be unproductive of the results which the emperor anticipated from it, another plan, still more shallow and futile, was devised to assist him through the crisis. As it never occurred to Paul that it was possible to establish a safe currency by any other means than a great influx of metals, he directed his whole attention to the attainment of that one purpose ; and it must be admitted that his efforts to secure it were as primitive and direct as the design itself was deficient in ingenuity. Neither gold nor silver could be procured from the mines, except in very trifling quantities ; the tax on merchandise, although it brought in some contributions to the imperial treasury, fell very short of the wants of the state ; and all that remained was to collect all the precious metals upon which the government could place its hands, in any part of the empire. The prodigality of Catherine had fortunately laid up a store of riches of this kind,

which, in the extremity of their contrivances, was greedily seized upon by the finance committee. The splendour which the empress loved to shed over every operation of the state was exhibited at the head-quarters of the local governments in all the chief towns, where she caused magnificent hotels to be erected for the residence of the chief and the heads of the several departments. In addition to this grand provision for external display, she presented each governor with a costly service of plate, to be used on public occasions, and particularly at the festivals appointed by Catherine herself. The original expense of these services was enormous, the very smallest of them having cost the empress 50,000 rubles ; and, as there were twenty-three governments who held treasures of this description in trust, Paul calculated largely upon the help which he would derive from their conversion into money. The governors were accordingly directed to deliver them up to the mint, and to make good any deficiencies that might have taken place during the fifteen years that had elapsed since they were purchased. When, however, the plate was all deposited, agreeably to the instructions to the emperor, it was discovered that, instead of yielding a sufficient sum to remedy the scarcity of specie, the intrinsic value of the whole was comparatively so trifling, that it would be of no avail in application to such a purpose. The emperor had forgotten to make any allowance for the usurious profits of the goldsmiths by whom it was fabricated, their charges for their skill in fashioning it into shape, and the heavy expense of its transport to the several provinces, which constituted at least a third of its nominal value. Exasperated at the discomfiture of his hopes, the emperor petulently ordered the plate to be broken up, and formed into helmets, cuirasses, and other pieces of armour, for his body guard, at his approaching coronation ; and, when it had served that purpose, the silver armour was given up to the goldsmiths, in payment of their labour in making it. Such were the first financial operations of

Paul, which, after an elaborate flourish of preparations, left the monetary system in a worse condition than it was before.

Paul affected to be an economist; and, in some branches of expenditure, he undoubtedly caused extensive reductions to be made; but, in his own habits, he early betrayed the same tendency to extravagance which had distinguished the reign of his mother, without exhibiting, like her, the same judgment and spirit in the selection of its objects. His personal expenditure was enormous in amount, and frivolous in its application. He had an insatiable passion for destroying and raising up; an impetuous love of change and innovation, springing from the original inconstancy of his disposition and the want of fixed principles, which plunged him into endless expenses. His coronation afforded an early proof of this impolitic and ruinous tendency. Resolved to exceed the sumptuousness of Catherine, he refused to wear the costly crown which she had worn for thirty-four years; but ordered another to be made, of still greater magnificence, which was valued at several millions of rubles, and which was conveyed from the jeweller's to the palace, says a contemporary writer, with as much pomp as if it were the Ark of the Covenant. The outlay upon the coronation, especially considering the state of the public finances, was so excessive, that it is difficult to suppress astonishment at the inconsiderateness of the emperor, on that as well as on other occasions, at the very opening of his reign. Catherine squandered extravagant sums upon favoured individuals: the gifts of Paul were even more lavish; and they were always bestowed upon persons who were already so wealthy, that the increase only served to pamper their pride and power into demonstrations of arrogance, dangerous alike to the safety of the throne and the interests of the people. But, if Catherine expended a considerable part of her treasures in this way, she latterly adopted the plan of extracting the means of her generosity from the spoils of her armies in neighbouring

countries, instead of impoverishing the empire by quar-
tering her dependants upon its industry, or by the
alienation of its lands. She seldom gave away any
estates but those that had been confiscated by war;
and frequently acted with so much strict justice as to
purchase property which she desired to confer. Paul,
heedless of this wise example, or eager to oppose it, le-
vied demands of this nature upon the soil, and bestowed
upon his courtiers a greater number of native peasants,
and larger tracts of Russian property, in ten months,
than Catherine bestowed in ten years. Sycophants,
gorged by frauds, received presents from Paul that, had
they been more judiciously distributed, would have
maintained hundreds of families, and rewarded the
deserts of thousands who served the state with zeal in
indigence and obscurity. But it is one of the repulsive
characteristics of a pure despotism, that the rich alone
accumulate riches, while the poor not only remain poor,
but are oppressed in proportion as the higher classes are
raised more and more above the reach of the social sym-
pathies. The worst crime, in such a country, is poverty
— the greatest virtue is wealth, no matter by what
measures of iniquity it has been obtained.

The impolicy of such proceedings as these is apparent,
not merely in the criminality of wasting the public re-
sources upon improper objects, but in the creation of a
craving and powerful body, whose attachment to the
throne, being purchased by expensive favours, is liable
to be loosened from it whenever the means of buying up
their support shall have become exhausted. In this
mainly consists the difference between a sovereignty
based upon the willing allegiance, the reasoning af-
fections, and consistent gratitude of a nation; and an
authority looking out upon its possessions from behind
a barrier of mercenaries, and perpetually coerced into
fresh acts of tyranny by the very fears that arise from
the consciousness of insecurity.

The prodigality of Paul was not limited to the mere
external pageantry of state, or to the extravagant pa-

tronage of subservient ministers. He seemed to have been inspired with so violent a determination to deviate from precedents of every description, that he could not reconcile himself to a residence in any of the palaces that had been erected for Catherine or her favourites — palaces that had cost Russia countless sums of money. His natural fondness for alterations gave increased force to this absurd prejudice, and cast him upon a variety of expedients for its gratification. The munificence of Catherine, and the reflected splendour of her courtiers, had already led by degrees to the formation of a mass of buildings of extraordinary extent and beauty; but these were not enough for Paul. He wished to be original, to displace the memorials of former times, and to raise in their stead some more wonderful testimonials of himself. Several palaces, built at different periods, but all with equal disregard to expenditure, had been, by ingenious and tasteful contrivances, united into one great whole, which ought to have realised the utmost desires of the emperor. One of these, the winter palace, which was built for the empress Elizabeth, in the style of Louis XIV., would have been alone sufficiently commodious for the reception of the entire court; and it was rendered still more capacious by the addition of three others, — the pavilion of the favourites, the extensive palace of the Hermitage, and the palace of Schepelof, together with some hotels that surrounded them, all of which had been thrown into communication with each other by means of galleries, so as to make one complete imperial residence of extraordinary dimensions.* In the grandeur

* This magnificent building was utterly destroyed by fire in December 1837. The fire broke out in the splendid hall of Peter the Great, at night, while the emperor and empress were at the theatre. The cold was so intense — the thermometer (Fahrenheit) standing at 54 degrees below the freezing point, — that the water cast upon the walls would have frozen, had not an apparatus been employed for heating it. The rapid progress of the flames, however, rendered all such precautions useless; and so powerful was the blaze, that the frozen surface of the Neva, near the palace, was thawed. Fortunately, the Hermitage was saved; but the total loss incurred in furniture, pictures, statues, and treasures of art was estimated at 25,000,000 of paper rubles (about 1,000,000*l.* sterling); but, in all proba-

of its palatial architecture, Russia, even in the reign of Catherine, surpassed the whole of the rest of Europe. With, perhaps, the single exception of Versailles in the age of Louis XIV., the court of St. Petersburg transcended in luxury and extravagance, in wanton pomp and needless display, all the courts of Europe. The severity of the climate, and the consequently enhanced value of those artificial expedients by which sterile winter is disarmed of its terrors, may in some degree account for the luxurious style of the entertainments, and the importance that was, and still is, attached to the munificence of the imperial arrangements. The domestic expenditure of the emperors, since the time of Peter the Great, has been so excessive as to excite the surprise of foreigners, already familiar with the sumptuous usages of other and more civilised countries.* In addition to the palaces we have men-

bility, this calculation falls below the actual loss sustained. One authority estimated it at 5,000,000*l.* In this great conflagration several pictures by Reubens were consumed. Nothing was preserved but the plate. The palace is said to have entertained within its walls 12,000 persons.

* The luxurious manner of living at the court of St. Petersburg furnishes a strange contrast to the wretchedness of the bulk of the population. While the peasants are in a state of destitution, the nobles revel in magnificence. The most costly wines, the most abstruse refinements of gastronomy, and the most exquisite discoveries of art, are brought in to give *éclat* to their festivities. Storch, in his "Picture of Petersburg," gives a description of the Taurique palace, and of a *fête* which prince Potemkin prepared there for the empress Catherine; a passage or two from which will sufficiently illustrate the voluptuous tastes of the Russian aristocracy. The whole account is like the dream of a Sybarite. After describing the façade of the building, and the interior, richly lighted up, with the rays multiplied into countless reflections by mirrors and globes of glass, he proceeds to speak of the enchantments employed to deceive the imagination out of the rigors of the climate. "Near this saloon," he informs us, "is the winter garden, separated from it only by the colonnade. The vault of this vast edifice is supported by pilasters in the form of palm trees. Within the walls are tubes, to conduct heat round the building; and canals of metal, filled with hot water, keep up an uniform temperature under this delightful parterre. The eye wanders with rapture over plants and shrubs of every clime, rests with admiration on an antique bust, or views with astonishment the various fishes of all hues in crystal vases. A transparent obelisk reproduces to the eye, under a thousand different tints, these wonders of art and nature: and a grotto, hung with looking-glasses, endlessly reflects them. The delicious temperature, the intoxicating odour of the flowers, and the voluptuous silence of this enchanting place, plunge the mind into a pleasing reverie, and transport the imagination to the woods of Italy. The illusion continues, till destroyed by the aspect of all the rudeness and severity of winter, when the enchanted eye wanders out of the windows, and beholds the frost and snow surrounding this magnifi-

tioned, were the marble palace, lying close in the same neighbourhood, the Anitskoi palace, the Taurique, and

cent garden. In the midst of this Elysium rises the majestic statue of Catherine II. in Persian marble." It was in this splendid palace that prince Potemkin gave his last entertainment to his sovereign. It was on an immense scale, like every thing which his genius conceived. Artists of all kinds were employed in the preparations for several months; during which time more than 100 persons assembled daily to rehearse the parts he had destined them to act, and every rehearsal, observes the chronicler, was a kind of feast. "At six in the evening, the entertainment was opened with a masked ball. When the carriage of the empress approached, meat, drink, and clothes of all kinds were distributed in profusion among the assembled populace. The empress entered the vestibule to the sound of lively music, executed by upwards of 300 performers. Then she repaired to the principal saloon, whither she was followed by the crowd; and ascended a platform, raised for her in the centre of the saloon, and surrounded by transparent decorations, with appropriate inscriptions. The company arranged themselves under the colonnade and in the boxes; and then commenced the second act of this extraordinary spectacle. The grand dukes Alexander and Constantine, at the head of the flower of all the young persons about the court, performed a ballet. The dancers, male and female, were forty-eight in number, all dressed in white, with magnificent scarfs, and covered with jewels, estimated to be worth above 10,000,000 of rubles (1,000,000*l.* sterling). The ballet was performed to select airs, suitable to the occasion, and interspersed with songs. The celebrated Lepic concluded it with a *pas* of his own composing. The company then removed to another saloon, adorned with the richest tapestry the Gobelin's could produce. In the centre was an artificial elephant, covered with rubies and emeralds; and his cornac was a Persian richly clad. On his giving the signal, by striking on a bell, a curtain rose, and a magnificent stage appeared at the end of the apartment. On it were performed two ballets of a new kind; and a lively comedy, by which the company were much amused, concluded the spectacle. This was followed by chorus-singing, various dances, and an Asiatic procession, remarkable for its diversity of dresses, all the people subject to the sceptre of the empress being represented in it. Presently after, all the apartments, illuminated with the greatest care, were thrown open to the eager curiosity of the crowd. The whole palace seemed on fire: the garden was covered with sparkling stones; mirrors innumerable, pyramids, and globes of glass, reflected the magic spectacle in all directions. A table was spread with 600 covers; and the rest of the guests were served standing. The table service was of gold and silver; the most exquisite dainties were served in vessels of the greatest richness; antique cups overflowed with the most costly liquors; and the most expensive chandeliers gave light to the table. Officers and domestics in great number, richly clothed, were eager to anticipate the wishes of the guests. The empress, contrary to custom, remained till midnight: she seemed to fear her departure would check the happiness of her favourite. When she withdrew, numerous bands of singers, and harmonious music, made the vaulted roofs of the palace resound with a hymn to her honour. At this she was so moved, that she turned to prince Potemkin to express her satisfaction; he, overpowered by the sentiment of what he owed his sovereign, fell at her feet, took her hand, and watered it with tears. This was the last time it was in his power to testify his gratitude to the august author of his grandeur in this place." Yet, elaborate as this entertainment was, it sinks into insignificance in comparison with some of the *fêtes* of Catherine. Its transparent globes, ballets, and dances, were slight pageantry compared to the illuminated mountains, the artificial villages, and mock battles of the imperial progress to Kerson.

the summer palaces ; which last was removed to make way for a still grander residence, dedicated to St. Michael. There was also Tzarskoe-Selo, in which vast treasures were sunk, and which, although it contained many valuable monuments of the glories of the empire, was utterly forsaken by Paul, who acted as if he despised the proud traditions that descended to him, and that were commemorated profusely around him. Speaking of the palace of Tzarskoe-Selo, a writer of that period* observes, "The commemorative pyramids, the rostral pillars of Tchesmè, the triumphal gates of the conqueror of Kagul, will soon be covered with moss and dirt. It will one day be necessary to look for their remains in those filthy marshes which the voice of Catherine had transformed into limpid lakes, and lined with marble. Those long porticoes, those bowers of verdure, where that famous woman came to meditate on projects, ever great, though frequently unjust and destructive ; the mausoleum of the elegant Lanskoi, which an amorous empress has so frequently bathed with her tears ; every thing, in fine, is shortly to disappear ; and these places, lately so enchanting, are on the point of being converted into heaps of rubbish, and to resume their primitive deformity. That gold which was swallowed up by so many embellishments, the sweat which moistened so many labours, these master-pieces of art and luxury, all will be lost to posterity. New treasures, new labours, will be expended at Gatschina and Pavlofsky, or in other favourite places, which will, in their turn, exercise the destructive genius of some of Paul's successors." These predictions were unfortunately too truly verified. The ruinous genius of Paul was not satisfied with merely consigning the ancient residences and more modern palaces of his predecessors to oblivion, and sometimes to destruction, but it inflicted heavy burdens upon the country, to enable him to indulge those wasteful propensities.

Throughout the whole course of his reckless expendi-

* *Mémoires Secrets, &c.*

ture, we discover the littleness of mind that distinguished his actions when he was grand duke. The smallest affairs, as we have already seen, he did not consider beneath his most serious attention. It is related of him that even in his castle of Pavlofsky he caused a terrace to be built, from which he could see the numerous sentinels around him ; one of his strange delights consisting in placing guards on every spot where it was possible to station a sentry-box. A part of every day was spent on this terrace, in the engrossing occupation of observing the motions of the sentinels through a glass ; and he frequently despatched messengers to them, to order them to button an additional button or so of their coats ; or to unbutton them, as his caprice might happen to suggest ; or to elevate or depress their muskets ; or to take a longer or shorter walk ; sometimes going in person a considerable distance to see these injunctions carried into effect, or to cane or reward a soldier, as the case might be, according to their neglect or their obedience. The village of Pavlofsky was not regularly garrisoned, and was not subjected to any of the regulations of fortified places ; yet Paul caused a strict account to be kept of the names of all persons who entered or left it, when they came, whither they were going, and the nature of their business. The houses were punctually visited in the evenings, and the severest system of surveillance was preserved. Every person who was seen with a dog was put under arrest. At last Pavlofsky was deserted, and people turned out of their way to avoid it. To such extremity did he carry his love of discipline, that he one day put all the officers of his battalion under arrest because they saluted him awkwardly in filing off the drill, and ordered them to be called out for eight days successively, and to file off and salute before him, until they were sufficiently practised in the manner to satisfy him.

He followed the same course of unmeaning etiquette when he ascended the throne ; and was mean enough to

devise stratagems to entrap his officers into violations of their prescribed duties. He required of his soldiers that they should be ready at all moments to turn out upon guard, making no allowances whatever for fatigue or for the time necessary for repose. He made the rounds in person, at all hours, as if he wished to come upon them by surprise ; and, if he saw through the window of the guard-house an officer in undress, or resting upon his truckle-bed, he immediately ordered him to turn out, indifferent to the grievous fatigue of the exercise, which frequently began at daylight, and did not close untill mid-day. Such was the alarm in which the officers lived, that they constantly kept spies about them, to warn them of the approach of the emperor, that they might be in readiness to attend him. It was a service of barren and fatiguing forms, into which it was impossible that the soldiery could infuse any sincere zeal or useful activity.

Sometimes Paul would have the roll-call beaten two or three times in the course of a day, to assure himself of the vigilance of his troops ; and on one occasion, being displeased with their performance of their evolutions, he broke out into a general complaint against the whole people, accusing them of want of vigilance and skill ; adding that they could only dress themselves like machines, but that they were incapable of acting with energy and promptitude. The grand duke Alexander, who was present upon parade, replied at once with firmness to this violent charge, defending the good will and activity of the garrison, which, he said, he was ready to put to the proof at any moment, by giving a false alarm. This felicitous suggestion exactly fell in with the taste of the emperor, who, taking the prince at his word, authorised him to beat to arms precisely at one o'clock in the morning. Alexander demanded his majesty's order in writing, which was given to him on the spot. The progress of this curious experiment upon the watchfulness of the troops forms an illustrative page in the history of the emperor.

The clocks of the city had no sooner struck the first hour, than the general was beaten, and the tocsin instantly sounded. Paul was buried in a profound slumber. The inhabitants, dismayed at the unexpected signal, rushed into the streets, which were rapidly filling with soldiers, assembling on the parade. Citizens and soldiers, mixed up in disorder, demanded of each other what had happened; but nobody was able to assign the cause. The houses were illuminated, and the universal alarm, spreading through the capital, at last reached the palace. The attendants of the emperor, equally taken by surprise, suddenly presented themselves in the imperial chamber; and Paul, who had entirely forgotten the events of the evening, rose in terror, believing that the hour of revolution, which he had so much reason to dread, had actually arrived. Fear so completely took possession of his mind, that he became bewildered, and thought only of flight. The consciousness of his unpopularity suggested a thousand suspicions; and, hastily dressing himself and mounting his horse, which he had ordered to be saddled in the first moment of his alarm, he took the road to Gatschina, followed only by two servants. He had scarcely cleared the palace, when the grand duke Alexander arrived to inform him that the troops were ready to obey his majesty's orders. Astonished at discovering that the emperor had fled in affright, he immediately rode after him. Paul, who was soon overtaken, no sooner heard the sound of horses following, than he imagined that he was pursued, and redoubled his efforts to escape; and it was not until Alexander left his suite behind him, and came up with him alone and unattended, that he could take courage to slacken his pace. An explanation of the affair restored him to tranquillity; but, ridiculous as it made him appear, it produced no permanent impression upon his subsequent conduct.*

It was not surprising that the harassing treatment which the soldiery thus suffered at the hands of the

* Malte-Brun, continuation of Levesque.

emperor should have spread terror amongst the officers. They went to the parade pallid and fear-stricken : it had become a service of danger, for the slightest breach of these minute regulations was sufficient to provoke the severest punishments. Paul sometimes even ordered under arrest civilians, who, drawn by curiosity, had come to witness the exercise of the troops, if their costume, or their looks, happened to offend him. The inevitable consequence of such tyranny in detail was the rapid decline of public confidence. The people became not only estranged from the government, but distrustful of each other. Universal consternation prevailed throughout the capital. The existence of a police that discharged the functions of a secret inquisition ; domiciliary visits which took place at all hours under the orders of the emperor ; the mode of life which prevailed at court, and which was, in fact, a system of espionage, and humiliating etiquette, exacted with the most arbitrary rigour ; and the alarms that constantly took place in the streets, arising from the inquietude of the soldiery, and the calamities with which the inhabitants were constantly inflicted ; speedily rendered St. Petersburg an unsafe and melancholy residence. Families were dispersed by the agents of the government ; the ancient habits of hospitality ceased to be observed ; midnight arrests, the sudden disappearance of citizens from their accustomed haunts and the disgraces and executions that hourly took place, spread general panic amongst the people. There was no security for life, no certainty of fulfilling with satisfaction the wishes of the tyrant, however anxious their fears might have rendered individuals to escape the punishments that fell with such promptitude and irregularity. Those persons who could afford to fly from the immediate surveillance of the court precipitately retired from St. Petersburg, leaving behind them a scene of sorrow and oppression, where, but a short time before, the sun shone daily on feasts and pageants. This state of things did not admit of disguise. Paul was not ignorant of the sen-

timents he inspired; and the reaction only increased his eagerness to protect himself against its results, and to impress his authority still more terribly on the minds of his subjects. The fate of his father was perpetually before his eyes; and he vainly believed that the safest means of averting it in his own case was to keep the people at as great a distance from his person as possible. Accordingly, as their fears increased, his despotism took fiercer shapes of oppression. Suspicious of every body, he even distrusted the empress, whose virtues he had so many reasons to rely upon. Whenever she spoke in a low voice, he imagined there was some treasonable conspiracy in progress; and on one occasion, when she was engaged in conversation with a foreign ambassador, he suddenly interrupted her, exclaiming, "You are preparing, perhaps, madam, to act the part of Catherine; but know that you will not find in me a Peter III." Such a monarch as this could not hope to find a friend, even amongst those who were elevated to the highest places by his capricious patronage.

Yet, notwithstanding these mingled cruelties and follies, there were some traits of humanity, and even generosity, in the character of Paul. He was so thoroughly unreflecting, his passions were so unbridled, and his judgment was so weak, that his actions were never governed by fixed principles, and sometimes had a fortuitous quality of good in them, which, coming, as it were, by surprise in the midst of so much evil, have elicited more admiration than they would have received had they emanated from a wiser and more consistent monarch. Thus, the historians of the time applaud him for pensions which he bestowed upon unfortunate persons; for the food which he occasionally caused to be distributed amongst poor officers; and, above all, for an hospital which he founded at Moscow. That the acknowledgment due to these acts, which were excellent as far as they went, has been greatly exaggerated in the expression, perhaps for the very reason we have assigned, does not, we think, admit of any doubt. The

dispersion of a few rubles amongst a few persons, the donation of food to reduced officers, and the establishment of an hospital, were surely slight and trivial deeds of benevolence for a sovereign who expended such enormous sums upon objects of idle pride and shallow pomp. The hospital he founded was a building which he merely converted to that purpose ; and it was limited to the reception of fifty patients, who were supported and attended at his expense.* It is charitable to give to Paul the full credit of the benefits he conferred upon the empire ; but, when we find the account of them narrow itself into so small a compass, we cannot refrain from regretting that he did not make a more extensive use of the extraordinary means which he possessed of promoting the happiness of his people. His charities, like his military regulations, were essentially microscopic.

The most important act of the first days of his reign was the law of the succession, which he promulgated immediately after his coronation. Russia had been so frequently agitated by the question of the succession, and so many conflicting claims to the throne had been set up in consequence of the laxity that had been suffered to creep into the practice by the accumulation of contradictory precedents, that this procedure on the part of Paul was justly regarded as a measure of great utility and good sense. It was one of the few acts which, in the first instance, procured him the good will of the people. Hitherto, the succession to the throne was entirely regulated by the will of the sovereign, or determined by force, or established through intrigue. The sovereignty, exposed to a variety of chances, always presented an object for conspiracy, fraud, and contest. The mischievous consequence which this species of uncertainty entailed upon the country had been so deeply and universally felt, that it became a point of the gravest consideration to place it, in future, beyond the action of such contingencies, and to rescue the people from modes

* The emperor Alexander considerably enlarged this hospital, which now admits a much greater number of patients.

of settling the crown, the least dangerous of which was more to be dreaded in its results than the convulsions attendant even upon popular election. The law published by Paul placed the question on a clear basis ; and, as it corresponded with the system which was generally adopted in the oldest European states, it was received with confidence and gratitude by the whole empire. By this law, the crown was to descend to the eldest son, and his male issue : in default of male issue, the second son and his male issue were to inherit the throne ; but, in default of males, the children of the female descendants were to succeed, always observing the same order of proximity. If it happened that the lawful heir to the crown, under any of these circumstances, was in possession of a foreign throne, he was required to renounce it before he could succeed to the throne of Russia ; but, if he refused to accede to this condition, then the crown was to pass to the next heir in the same order of descent. In the event of the successor being a minor, the reigning sovereign was authorised to appoint a regent ; but, should he fail to do so, the regency was to be reposed in the mother of the minor, or, in default of a mother, in the nearest relative. The law fixed the majority of the sovereign at sixteen years.

CHAP. III.

PERSIAN WAR. — RETROSPECT OF ITS CAUSES AND PROGRESS. — DISSENSION AMONGST THE PERSIAN PRINCES. — PERFIDY OF THE RUSSIANS. — SITUATION OF GEORGIA AT THIS JUNCTURE. — FLIGHT OF HERACLIUS. — CATHERINE UNDERTAKES AN EXPEDITION AGAINST PERSIA. — VALERIAN ZUBOF APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND. — FLUCTUATING FORTUNES OF THE ENTERPRISE. — THE ARMY SUDDENLY RECALLED UPON THE ACCESSION OF PAUL. — DESIGNS OF RUSSIA IN REFERENCE TO INDIA. — ANCIENT TRADING ROUTES TO INDIA. — SUCCESSIVE ATTEMPTS OF RUSSIA TO SECURE THE TRADE OF THE EAST. — GEORGIA ANNEXED TO RUSSIA. — TREATY OF ALLIANCE CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE SHAH AND NAPOLEON. — PERSIA PERMANENTLY DRAWN INTO THE POLICY OF EUROPE. — AN AMBASSADOR SENT FROM ENGLAND TO TEHERAN. — TREATY OF GOOLISTAN. — FAITHLESSNESS OF THE CABINET OF ST. PETERSBURG.

THE expedition against Persia, which had been begun by Catherine, and which was productive of no other results than disappointment and mortification to Russia, was wisely terminated by Paul, upon his accession to the throne. His attention was called off in another direction, by circumstances sufficiently absorbing to render that decision necessary, even were it not urged upon him by his determination to reverse, wherever it was practicable, the policy of his predecessor.

The war in Persia excited, at the time, very little observation in Europe: events of greater importance engrossed the public mind; but, as it developed the designs of Russia in a quarter of the world which has subsequently occupied a larger space in the annals of conquest and civilisation,—designs which Russia has never since adandoned,—and, as it resembled in many respects, and in none less forcibly than the motives with which it was undertaken, the French expedition against

Egypt, of which it has been called a parody*; and, as it would have led, had it succeeded, to similar consequences, it is essential to the more complete elucidation of the Russian system that a brief retrospect of its causes and its progress should be introduced here.

Catherine had accustomed her subjects to such war-like habits, and had been so incessantly engaged in projects of aggrandisement, that the peace she entered upon with Sweden and Turkey plunged her into a state of inactivity, which presented too sudden a transition to be of long continuance. While she was thus releasing herself from expensive and protracted wars, the whole of the rest of Europe was involved in contention. She had therefore hardly closed the Turkish campaign, when her restless spirit, repenting of that hasty measure, longed for new fields of conquest, and discovered in the unsettled state of Persia a tempting region, not only for the employment of her armies, but for enabling her, indirectly, to resume that scheme of ambition, in reference to the East, which her treaty with Turkey had inopportunely suspended. Inveterate as were her prejudices towards France, and anxious as she was to embark in hostilities against that power, she was not yet prepared to assist Austria in its calamitous struggles, or to venture upon the succour of Italy, Egypt, and Malta. She perceived in the spreading acquisitions of France the seeds of future convulsions, and the germ of an European war, and craftily postponed the period of her interference, until the belligerent powers should have become so exhausted by their efforts, that she could dictate her own terms. England was engaged in a sanguinary war with France, and Prussia was occupied with her new acquisitions in Poland. The disturbed state of Europe was in the highest degree favourable to her plans; and she saw, when it was too late, that, had she not concluded a peace with Turkey, the time was arrived when

* Malte-Brun's continuation of L  vesque; M  moires Secrets, &c. The greater part of Malte-Brun and Depping's addition to L  vesque is a literal transcript, merely changing the person, and converting the contemporaneous narrative into a historical retrospect, of the M  moires Secrets.

she might have marched, almost certain of victory, into the dominions of the Porte, and planted her standard on the walls of Constantinople. The only available movement, therefore, which remained open to her, and which presented the probable means of ultimately extending her territories to the south of Europe and Asia, was an invasion of Persia. The internal troubles which agitated that country assisted her materially in the prosecution of her design.

The throne of the Sophis, doomed to witness a succession of short-lived kings, who struggled in vain to preserve the monarchy after the death of the celebrated Thamas Kouli Khan, was at last broken up, and the kingdom dismembered, the governors of each province assuming to themselves, in their own districts, the rights of independent sovereignty. Amongst the neighbouring princes, the most distinguished, at this juncture, for courage and abilities was Heraclius of Georgia, formerly a vassal of Persia, but who, by the force of his indomitable valour, had freed himself from that bondage, and had subsequently, assisted by Russia, contended for the liberties of his province against Turkey. But he committed a fatal mistake in asking help from Russia. The price of such succour was invariably greater than the evils it was called in to avert. Wherever Russia interfered as an ally, she usually contrived to establish herself as a mistress, either by exacting oppressive tributes, or by direct usurpation. In this instance, she was satisfied with forcing Heraclius to acknowledge himself a vassal of the imperial Catherine, confirming his submission by placing a garrison in Teflis, the capital of his kingdom. The petty princes of the surrounding country were subjugated in the same way, and annexed to the Russian dominions, under the mock title of czars protected by the empire. One tribe alone, the savage Lesghis, girt in by inaccessible mountains, continued to defy the encroachments of the invader, and to preserve their freedom to the last.

1784.
to
1785.

While the province of Georgia was thus circumstanced,

a descendant of the ancient family of Sophis, Mehemet Khan, who had been barbarously mutilated in his infancy by Thamas Kouli Khan to disqualify him from asserting his claims to the throne, suddenly arose at the head of a powerful force, and, possessing himself of Ispahan, rapidly traversed the whole of Persia ; and succeeded, at length, through a series of perfidies and cruelties, in reuniting the dismembered provinces once more under one head. The means he employed were such as suited his occasions : he permitted no scruples on the ground of humanity to interfere with his grand object ; but, extirpating the scattered hordes of the Tartars, who, taking advantage of the weakness consequent upon intestine divisions, had penetrated into various places, and the wandering Arabs, wherever he fell in with them, he finally accomplished his purpose of restoring the kingdom to its original unity. In this great enterprise, he had been effectually assisted by his brothers, who held, in their own right, separate governments ; but he no sooner found himself in a condition to dispense with their services, than he called upon them to submit to his authority, and tender allegiance to him as their sovereign. This act of ingratitude determined the brothers to revolt, and to coalesce against him. In this resolution they were sustained by Heraclius and his Russian allies, who, having already established a fort at Ferabad* in Mazanderan, one of the principalities belonging to the brothers of Mehemet Khan, believed it to be their interest to protect the revolted princes against the increasing power of the new shah. But the arms of Mehemet were still victorious. He overthrew his kinsmen in several battles, took two of them prisoners, and beheaded them in his camp ; destroyed the Russian settlement at Ferabad ; and drove the Russian general ignominiously from his post. Flight alone remained for the two princes, who escaped alive

* This settlement, which is situated on the south coast of the Caspian, was regarded by Catherine and Potemkin as a very important position in reference to the plans of oriental conquest which they meditated.

out of these disasters ; and, after an ineffectual attempt to make a stand against Mehemet, they retired with their wives and treasures to Baku and Derbent ; but, being apprehensive of their safety in those quarters, they fled, the one to Astracan, and the other to Kislar on the Caspian, a small fort then invested by the Russian general Potemkin (a relative of prince Potemkin), who commanded in the Caucasus. Notwithstanding that the empress had directly aided these unfortunate fugitives in the first instance, and, therefore, led them to suppose that they might calculate with confidence upon her protection, she did not hesitate, now that they were vanquished and incapable of offering resistance to the ascendant genius of Mehemet, to abandon them to their fate. She even meditated a friendly negotiation with Mehemet, apprehensive that he might form an alliance with Turkey ; but in neither case did she openly adopt any course that could commit her to a decisive line of policy. She awaited the issue of events before she appeared personally in these affairs, suffering her representatives, in the mean time, to act with unparalleled treachery to the unhappy princes, and reserving to herself the power to take such steps afterwards as the turn of fortune might render expedient.

1786. When the Russian general was apprised that a Persian prince was approaching the shores of Kislar to solicit an asylum, he sent him a message to the effect that he could not receive him, as Russia was at peace with Persia, and would not embroil herself in a war by affording protection to rebels. This language was too explicit to be mistaken ; but the prince, pursued by the vessels of Mehemet, and remembering the tributes he had paid to Russia, and the encouragement he had already received in his enterprises from that power, deceived himself into a belief that Potemkin was ignorant of the real circumstances of his case, or that an explanation would remove the obstacles which he seemed to consider insuperably opposed to his reception ; and, relying confidently on those rights of hospitality which

are uniformly respected in the East, and which misfortune only renders more sacred, he appeared in the roadstead, in sight of the Russian fort. The intelligence of his arrival no sooner reached Potemkin, who now, for the first time, learned that his ship was filled with treasures, in gold, jewels, and costly stuffs, than, dissembling his intentions with the basest hypocrisy, he immediately sent out some armed boats to meet him. The Russians were received on board as deliverers and benefactors, with unbounded expressions of enthusiasm and gratitude ; but they had hardly surveyed the vessel and assured themselves of its cargo, than, abandoning all disguise, they fell upon the helpless Persians, and massacred them in detail, without distinction of sex or age. Some, in their efforts to escape the sword, were cast into the sea ; amongst whom was the prince, who, struggling for life with fearful tenacity, clung with one hand to a boat, maintaining his grasp till his hand was cut off by a sabre. But vital power was not yet extinct: rising, nearly exhausted, to the surface of the water, he grasped the boat again with his remaining hand, which, like the other, was cut off with a single stroke ; when a friendly pike, perfecting the murder, pierced his quivering body, which sank lifeless to the bottom. When this perfidious catastrophe was accomplished, the Persian vessel was carried into the harbour, and its treasures were divided between Potemkin and his accomplices. Such occurrences were too common in Russia to produce much observation : besides, it was a principle at court to allow the official servants of the state to enrich themselves by plunder whenever any colour of pretext could be alleged for proceedings of that sort ; and, as the relations of Russia with Persia at that period happened to be trembling in the scales, it was not considered politic to take any notice of this infamous transaction.

Sahli Khan, the other Persian prince, fared scarcely any better than his brother. He had been permitted to enter Astracan, which was also under the command of Potemkin ; and, when he heard of the tragedy of Kislar,

and the fate of his treasures, which he had intrusted to the safe conduct of his brother, he petitioned the empress, relating the facts as they had been described to him, and making those demands for justice which presented themselves naturally to his mind:—restitution of his property, security for himself, and vengeance on the murderers of his brother. The simplicity of this appeal betrayed profound ignorance of the character of the empress, and the nature of the Russian system of policy. A clandestine correspondence in neighbouring countries, the fomentation of intrigues, the creation of factions, and the preservation of links of constant intercourse with the malcontents and traitors and disaffected of other countries, who are thus kept in play until their services can be rendered useful, form the basis of Russian diplomacy; the far-spreading agencies of which, its overwhelming influence, and powerful organisation throughout every state in Europe, can never be detected, except in their wondrous results. Sahli Khan's petition was treated with artful neglect. The time was not arrived when he could be made use of with advantage; and Potemkin received strict orders to keep a watchful guard over him, while a trifling pension was extended to him, as a token of sympathy in his distresses. The prince, wounded and irritated by this usage, expressed his desire to return to Persia, preferring the death which, in all probability, would have followed such a step, to the ignominy of his situation at Astracan: but Potemkin's instructions were peremptory and conclusive. Sahli Khan was detained, as an available instrument for ulterior purposes; and the opportunity was not long wanted for bringing his utility to bear upon the projects of the empress.

When Georgia was annexed to Persia, by conquest, in the sixteenth century, shah Abas granted to that kingdom a peculiar privilege, which had continued to be recognised by each new sovereign, until Georgia, severing itself from the compact, reasserted its independence. This privilege consisted in the power of conferring upon

the king of Persia the title of shah, which, agreeably to the stipulations there entered upon, he could not assume until it had been acknowledged in the first instance by the prince of Georgia. The object which shah Abas had in view when he conceded this curious prerogative to the conquered territory was, to attach the people more firmly to his throne by giving them, through their prince, a direct participation in the imposition of the supreme authority. Accompanying this right, were some conditions on the other side. The prince of Georgia was required to pay tribute in money, furs, and slaves, and to furnish, at his own expense, a levy of 12,000 soldiers, or even a greater number, if the exigencies of the state should render it necessary ; and his eldest son, as a pledge for his fidelity, was kept at the court of Persia, where he was compelled to embrace the Mahometan religion, and, although treated with distinction, and raised to the highest military dignities, carefully guarded as a hostage. Mehemet Khan, who had now invested the whole of Persia, and possessed himself of the banks of the Caspian and the adjacent provinces, did not hesitate to adopt the title of shah, contrary to ancient usage, without waiting for the consent of the prince of Georgia ; but, wanting the accustomed acknowledgment, which was a matter of some importance in the estimation of a superstitious people, he did not feel himself quite secure, until his assumption of that dignity was properly legalised. In order to effect this end, it was necessary to win over Heraclius to his views, or force him to submission. Heraclius, now eighty years of age, would gladly have escaped the collision with the powerful Mehemet, to which this unexpected difficulty exposed him. The fire of youth was extinct within him: he had filled up his measure of usefulness by vindicating the liberties of his country, and redeeming her from the yoke of Persia ; and he would have willingly retreated from the scene, leaving to more active spirits the protection of those institutions he had succeeded in founding and building up, but that Russia interposed

and compelled him to answer the demands of Mehemet
1795. with open defiance. The modern Nares, however, was not easily turned aside from his purposes; and, despising the threats of the ministers of that power, he burst upon Georgia like a devastating flame, and, laying waste the face of the country as he advanced, carried fire and sword to the walls of Teflis, which he sacked and burned; and, after surrendering the adjacent districts to the fury of his followers, returned in triumph to his capital, loaded with booty, and taking with him upwards of 50,000 Georgians, whom he cast into banishment, or sold in the slave-market. The unfortunate Heraclius, who now more than ever lamented his misplaced confidence in Russia, fled to the barren mountains, where he concealed himself, with the remnant of his adherents, his court, and his family. The prostration of this fine province, and the insults which Mehemet had unsparingly heaped upon her servants, filled Catherine with indignation. She no sooner received the news of the destruction of Teflis, than she resolved to seize upon the occasion for carrying her long-cherished design into operation. She had a sufficient excuse for war in the proceedings of the shah; and now it was that Sahli Khan was introduced upon the scene, as a specious cloak for the sinister ends of the empress.

1796. A courier was despatched to Astracan with costly presents for the young prince, and an invitation, most graciously conveyed, requesting him to repair to St. Petersburg. The Persian fugitive, who, but the day before, was treated with suspicion and contempt, harassed by spies, and denied all freedom of speech and action, was on the sudden invested with the dignities of the station which Russia had treacherously refused to defend or acknowledge in his person, and solicited to visit as a sovereign, coming to claim help and vengeance, that court which had connived at the murder of his brother, and which had, through its representatives, plundered him of his treasures, and designated him as a rebel. But the prospect of regaining his possessions, and ob-

taining the means of making reprisals upon Mehemet, soothed his offended pride ; and, exulting with the impetuous ardour of youth in the anticipation of the brilliant fortune that lay before him, he at once accepted the overtures of the court. His appearance in St. Petersburg partook more of a triumph than a welcome. Every where he went he commanded regard and attention. He was lodged by the empress in chambers in the palace, expressly devoted to his own use ; and the courtiers exhausted their skill in exhibiting the interest with which they professed to be inspired on his behalf. Catherine carried her hypocrisy so far as to declare that it was only recently she had heard of his misfortunes, and even pretended to feel highly incensed at the conduct of Potemkin. As a proof of her sincerity, she appointed a commission, with authority to institute a most rigorous investigation into the whole affair ; but the commissioners, after making a great show of zeal while Sahli Khan remained in St. Petersburg, gradually relaxed in the prosecution of the inquiry, and finally dropped it altogether. The whole proceeding was a farce to gratify the feelings of the prince, who had become the hero of Catherine's new drama, and whom it was therefore necessary to propitiate until he had accomplished the desired catastrophe.

From the moment the expedition against Persia was determined upon, the capital presented a scene of extraordinary bustle. The activity of the military, and the excitement that prevailed in all quarters, diffused a corresponding enthusiasm amongst the people. A fictitious importance was attached to the approaching war ; and the most extravagant dreams of aggrandisement engrossed the imagination of the court. Before a single preparation for the campaign had been completed, the ministers and general officers already calculated with certainty upon the results, and even distributed amongst themselves the fruits of their victories. The splendid cities of Persia, marts of commerce, and magazines of wealth, had already fallen under their arms. Having overrun

the shores of the Caspian and the adjacent countries, of which they made sure at once, Kasbin and Tauris were next vanquished and rifled of their costly stores : onwards to gorgeous Ispahan, to golden Shiraz, and Bender Abassi was but an easy march to troops plumed with triumphs ; and, when Persia had been thus subdued—when the commerce of India had been drawn back into the channels through which it flowed in the early ages—when England, France, and Holland had been beggared, and shut out from the trade of Hindostan—and when the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf were covered by countless fleets of Russian vessels, with their proud flags bathed in the sunshine of prosperity,—it was not difficult to pursue the progress of acquisition to Constantinople, and to contemplate the subjugation of Turkey, as the last pageant of this magnificent panorama. It was necessary, however, to organise the means of setting about an enterprise of such magnitude ; and, when Catherine came to review the state and extent of her available forces, she found that she had resolved upon going to war before she had assured herself of the power of carrying that resolution into effect.

The armies that had been equipped for former wars were still scattered over the countries where their several exploits had been performed. The remnant of her troops under Suwarrow still lay in Poland, enfeebled by long sufferings and unparalleled hardships in the field, and slowly recovering from the lingering effects of famine. An army of 25,000 men, commanded by general Gudovitsch, occupied the passes of Kuban ; but they could not be spared from a post of so much consequence, which was incessantly exposed to incursions on the frontiers from the ferocious race who kept the neighbouring mountains. Wherever she turned for succours, the same impediments met her. But she was of a temperament to overcome greater difficulties than these. She resolved to draw contributions from every part of her dominions ; and, marking out Kislár as the rendezvous of the battalions, she set them in motion for

that remote point at the same moment of time. The season, which was the depth of the winter; the steppes of Astracan and Kuban, which it was necessary to cross, and which, arid and unfavourable to the progress of the soldiers, were utterly destitute of forage; and the contagious diseases that raged on the shores of the Caspian, from Astracan to Kislär and Mosdok, and that had already destroyed the garrisons stationed at those places, were unpropitious to her design. She persevered, notwithstanding. It was necessary to raise a sufficient force at the point from whence the expedition was to start, and to organise a fleet to supply it with provisions. A few frigates were fitted out for this purpose, and ship-builders and sailors were sent out to Kislär to commence operations. The most surprising energy and promptitude were exhibited in the fulfilment of her plans. Troops marched simultaneously from almost every part of the empire and its dependent provinces—from Poland, Siberia, Moscow, Mittau, St. Petersburg. Some had upwards of 800 leagues to traverse before they could reach their destination; and others were unprovided with the requisite resources for their journey. One fourth of the total number perished on the road before they arrived at Kislär. Fresh ukases, however, supplied these losses, and the armament proceeded with an impetuosity which was scarcely credible.

About the month of May, these preparations, which had been begun only a few months before, were completed; and an army of 30,000 men were gathered upon the plains in the neighbourhood of Kislär. But, as yet, the general who was to take the command of the expedition was not appointed, and the greatest anxiety prevailed to ascertain upon whom the choice of the empress would fall in this great emergency. Suwarrow, Kamenskoy, Gudovitch, able and experienced generals, were named in turn by the eager populace; but none of these were thought of by Catherine: she was moved, in her selection, by other qualities than those of military skill; and, passing over all the tried soldiers who had covered

her name with glory, she invested Valerian Zubof, the brother of the reigning favourite, himself a participator in the honours of that creditable office, with the supreme command of the troops. This extraordinary appointment was regarded with astonishment by every person who was acquainted with the difficulties that beset every step of the war; but it excited little surprise amongst the courtiers, who were accustomed to see the creatures of the empress put forward on all occasions, wherever there was profit of any kind to be reaped, without reference to their capacity or their claims. Zubof entered upon his new duties with a presumptuous confidence that testified not only the insolence of his character, but his complete ignorance of the arduous nature of the undertaking. He was immediately surrounded by parasites and speculators. A thousand wonderful plans distracted his imagination: his rapid fancy traversed Persia with numberless caravans, laden with the riches of India; and he was so assured of success, that he accepted proposals for the establishment of an East India company at Derbent and Ferabad, of which he nominated himself the head; appointed a number of his friends and flatterers to posts in the yet unconquered territories; and actually arranged new tariff tables for the trade of the countries he was about to annex to Russia. While these schemes were absorbing his time in St. Petersburg, the army, after waiting in vain for its commander, was upon its march, and had proceeded a considerable distance before it was overtaken by Zubof and his train of greedy expectants.*

The part which Sahli Khan was to act in this expe-

* Catherine designated Valerian Zubof as "our dearest and tenderly beloved count Zubof" in the ukase she issued appointing him to the command of the army. These endearing epithets were new in such documents. But the despatches she addressed to him were still more affectionate. Zubof, it is said, used to get a friend to answer them for him, as he was unqualified, by education, to keep up such a correspondence. He was associated with his brother, Plato Zubof, and their friend Soltikof, in the office of favourite; and that triumvirate closed the days of the lusty Catherine. Plato Zubof was originally a lieutenant in the army, and was recommended to the regards of his imperial mistress, simply by his youth and his handsome figure. Out of such materials Catherine did not hesitate to provide for the government of Russia.

dition now began to be developed. Recognised as the rightful sovereign of his own province, he was also supported by Russia in the claims which he advanced on this occasion, for the first time, to the throne of the Sophis ; and, when he joined the army, he issued an elaborate manifesto in the Persian language, denouncing his brother as a tyrant, and as one unqualified by circumstances to reign in his native country ; and inviting all his faithful subjects to come to his assistance in expelling him from the throne, and to receive the generous Russians, who had entered the field to vindicate their cause, as friends and benefactors. But, in the event of the Persians being so dull, or so obstinate, as not to adopt this disinterested advice, the manifesto closed with an alternative of wrath and vengeance, threatening them with the total destruction of Tauris and Ispahan, in case they should attempt to resist his advance, or even to remain neutral in the conflict. This proclamation was accompanied by another from the empress, in which the same arguments were enforced, and her imperial revenge was added to that of the aspiring prince.

The relative geographical positions of Russia and Persia present almost insuperable difficulties to the advance of an army from one country into the other. The boundary between them — the stupendous chain of the Caucasus, separating the Black Sea from the Caspian — would appear to have been designed by nature as a limit to the nations at either side, and as a barrier against their encroachments upon each other ; yet for a hundred years the sovereigns of Russia have steadily persevered in their efforts to establish themselves beyond the Caucasus, for ulterior views of vast acquisition, which alone could justify the enormous expenditure they incurred by their numerous expeditions in that direction. The formidable armament of Peter the Great from Astracan, the extravagant cost at which Catherine attempted to maintain herself in Georgia, and the subsequent absorption of that kingdom as an integral part of the Russian empire, all pointed

to the same end. On no other ground would a policy promoted through such immense sacrifices of blood and treasure be intelligible. There is but one passage into Georgia through which it is possible to convey an army and its baggage, — that part of the Caucasian chain which borders the Caspian Sea, which is least steep of the whole, and which, although it occasionally descends in perpendicular rocks into the water, withdraws at intervals, leaving a wide sandy beach between its base and the sea. The inland course of the mountains is inaccessible: terrible precipices, perpetual torrents, and impervious forests, breasting the frontier, and rendering the progress of troops hopeless. The Russians, compelled to adopt the former track, experienced even greater obstacles than they had anticipated. Fortunately, the warlike and hostile tribes that inhabit that inclement region, and that are amongst the invincible enemies of the empire, hovering for prey incessantly on the borders, offered no opposition to their advance; and, by taking the precaution of sending their provisions and heavy baggage by their vessels, which coasted along the shore, they were at last, after encountering incredible toils, enabled to penetrate the defiles.

The immediate pretext which gave occasion to the war was the incursion of Mehemet into Georgia; and that pretext was now removed, as, previously to the appearance of the Russians he had evacuated the country, and Heraclius had returned to his capital. But this alteration in the state of things was disregarded by the Russians, who, having ulterior projects to carry, were resolved to prosecute the war, even although the grounds on which it was ostensibly undertaken no longer existed.

The first place of consequence before which the army sat down was the old fortress and town of Derbent, the capital of Daghistan. This ancient citadel, standing at the foot of the mountains, close to the Caspian gates, and possessing the best harbour, or roadstead, on the coast, might have been rendered capable of an obstinate defence; but the Persians were so little skilled

in fortification, that they did not think it necessary to protect the place with any advanced works or artillery, relying merely upon a wall that surrounded it, flanked with mouldering towers. This frail shelter could not long be maintained against the assaults of the besiegers. The Lesghis and Persians, about one hundred in number, who had thrown themselves into the town, exhibited prodigies of valour, and made so desperate a resistance, that it soon became evident that they had resolved to die in the breach, in preference to making conditions of surrender. For a few days, their ferocious courage was successful ; but the formidable power of the Russians at last overwhelmed them, and the town, presenting a terrible spectacle of carnage, submitted.* This being the first victory that was achieved on the march of the army, it was celebrated in St. Petersburg with the most extravagant rejoicings. The firing of cannon and ringing of bells were the startling announcements of an event which the people were easily led to regard as the forerunner of the conquest of Persia.

Flushed with triumph, the Russian army made a rapid advance, but without meeting with the enemy they came to seek. Passing onwards from Derbent, they next occupied Baku, also situated on the coast, and rested in the month of July at Schamachy. Here they were compelled by the unhealthiness of the season, which seriously affected the troops, to suspend their operations.

The climate in this place, injurious even to the natives, was especially dangerous to the Russians. Incessant rains, rendered still more insalubrious by excessive heat and pestilential winds, and the immoderate use of fruit, particularly melons, which were here abundant, produced a contagion amongst the soldiers, that was followed by great mortality. In this extremity,

* It was stated, on this occasion, that the old man who delivered the keys of Derbent to Zubof was the same who, in the year 1722, had presented them to Peter the Great. The fact has been disputed ; but it is not worth discussion, especially as it is admitted on all hands that there was a man at Derbent, at the time, who affirmed that he remembered the entrance of Peter.

they were forced to obtain constant reinforcements from the troops under the command of Gudovitsch ; but these succours only increased their difficulties, by increasing the number of the sick. Thus situated, exposed, on the one hand, if they remained in the open country, to the ravages of disease, and, on the other, to the tribes of the Caucasus if they removed towards the mountains, they had nothing left but a choice of dangerous alternatives. They adopted the latter ; drew off towards the mountains, and, from August to November, were subjected to the harassing assaults of a variety of enemies, who, in those districts, always fought at an advantage.

The tribes inhabiting the Caucasus were always troublesome on the frontier ; descending upon the plains to make sudden predatory excursions, and, after ravaging the country, returning to their hills secure against reprisals. Of these the Lesghis were the most formidable, not merely by their tact in warfare of this kind, and their sanguinary temper, but by their numerical superiority. Some estimate of their strength may be formed from the fact that, in 1712, they swept from the eastern extremity of the Caucasian range down upon the plains of Sheerwan, to the number of 20,000, for the purpose of exacting from the peaceful people of that region an indemnity for the yearly donations with which the shah had been in the habit of purchasing their forbearance ; but of which either his want of means or the cupidity of his servants had for some time previously deprived them. Upon that occasion, they laid waste the whole country around, indiscriminately slaughtering every individual who opposed them, including the whole population of Schamachy, and about 300 Russians. From this savage race the Russians, encamped at the foot of the mountains, under the command of Valerian Zubof, experienced the most distressing resistance. Pouring down upon them perpetually, they forced them into daily skirmishes, in which the Russians, although they were always successful, suffered severe losses. The constant renewal of these attacks having effectually weak-

ened the force of the invaders, the mountaineers were at last encouraged to make a more open and decisive demonstration; and, supported by a corps of Persian cavalry, the most expert and the best disciplined part of the army of the shah, they surprised some battalions of chasseurs, and, falling upon them with precipitation, committed such carnage, that the camp was thrown into a state of indescribable confusion and alarm. An obstinate battle ensued: the victory, for several hours, seemed to fluctuate from side to side; and it was not until a considerable havoc had been made in their ranks, that the Russians were left in possession of the field. Upwards of 1000 of the Persians and their allies fell in this engagement. While these calamitous triumphs were wasting the Russian army, Mehemet Khan, aware of the inferiority of his troops to the enemy against whom he had to contend, and especially of the uselessness of his cavalry, upon which he mainly relied in the gorges of Georgia and the straits of Daghistan, and satisfied that the climate and the Caucasian robbers would be more successful than his arms, retired behind the Araxis, and took up his position on the healthy plains bordering on Tauris. In his progress, he followed the old usage of depopulating the provinces through which he passed. All the places lying between the Araxis and the Cyrus were overrun, the villages were laid in ruins, the trees every where cut down, and the fields ploughed up; so that the country, which was recently covered with a happy peasantry and fertile crops, now presented nothing but a barren solitude. His policy seemed to be a crafty flight, tempting the enemy onwards, like the Parthians, until he might draw them into the plains, where, by one great battle, the advantages of the ground being all at his own side, he might decide the fate of the empire. What the ultimate result of his plans might have been, it is, perhaps, not difficult to conjecture, if circumstances had not interrupted the movements of the Russian army. As far as Zubof had hitherto advanced, he had been victorious; but at such

a cost, that it would have been impossible to have maintained himself much longer with similar sacrifices. The troops of Gudovitsch were already exhausted by the succours which that general had sent to his aid ; and, although a levy was still going forward in every part of the empire to strengthen this expedition, and regiments were still on their march from different quarters to increase and maintain it, the whole disposable force amounted to no more than 18,000 men, which was utterly inadequate to meet the difficulties it had to encounter. But the details of this enterprise have never been accurately stated, nor do any means exist of obtaining them now. The cabinet of St. Petersburg has invariably suppressed, upon all such occasions, the publication of any particulars calculated to betray their failures. Whenever disasters have befallen their undertakings, they were either kept secret or totally misrepresented ; so that the magnificent promises with which they set out might not be cast back upon them with reproaches.* Notwithstanding, however, the discouraging circumstances that surrounded Zubof, he pushed forward, confident of support from the empress ; and, after receiving the submission of the fortresses of Badkoo, Koobba, and Sheerwan, whose governors he changed, he wintered at Moghan, having previously taken possession of Anzelee, the port of Ghilan, Lan-keran, Ganja, and Saree.

Such was the position of the two armies — Zubof encamped on the banks of the Cyrus, waiting for reinforcements, and a favourable opportunity to renew his operations ; and Mehemet occupying the plains beyond the Araxis, — when the death of Catherine, in 1796, suddenly terminated this ambitious and hopeless

* There is nothing published in the gazettes, except what is specially ordered ; and the losses of the army are very rarely suffered to be inserted. A corps of troops was cut to pieces in the Caucasus in 1784, with a prince of the house of Hesse-Rheinfels at its head ; and the fact did not transpire for several years afterwards. In 1789, general Bibikof was cashiered for a disaster which he was enjoined to keep secret, and which is still a mystery. The historians act upon the same principle : they are not the disciples of truth, but the agents of despotism.

project. The first intelligence which the Russian general received of this news, alike fatal to his immediate plans and his personal fortunes, was an order from Paul to suspend his movements, to make the army swear allegiance to the new sovereign, and to remain in the quarters he held until further instructions were received. He had no choice but to submit. The promptitude of Paul did not leave him much time for rumination: three weeks had scarcely elapsed when a courier arrived with a large packet; but, upon opening it, he discovered that it contained nothing more than a number of sealed despatches directed to the several commanders of the different regiments, and not a single line addressed to himself. This indignity increased the humiliation to which he was reduced; and the last extremity of his misfortunes seemed to have been accomplished, when he discovered that the despatches contained peremptory orders to each commander to return immediately to Russia by the shortest routes. Worse calamities, however, were in store for the unlucky favourite of the empress. The colonels, upon receipt of these instructions, lost no time in representing to the general that it was impossible for them to undertake such a march at so inclement a season, being entirely destitute of forage for the horses, having no magazines for the troops, and the passes of the Caucasus, through which it was necessary for them to penetrate, being choked with snow. But these remonstrances were idle. Zubof possessed no authority to interfere: he durst not tamper with the orders of the emperor; and he dismissed the commanders, by telling them that, however reasonable their statements were, they must, at all hazards, comply with the emperor's injunctions. In these disastrous circumstances, the army, abandoned unavoidably by its leader, and broken up into separate detachments, was forced to begin its march, without being able to make any preparations for the journey. Each regiment took the route that seemed best to its colonel; and, as there was no concerted action amongst

them, they fell into the utmost disorder on the road, frequently sustaining greater losses from their ignorance of the country, and the confusion and embarrassment that pervaded their ranks, than they had previously suffered at the hands of their enemies. At length, the straggling remains reached Kislár, in the spring of 1797, after a toilsome march of six weeks, exhibiting in the misery of their looks the signal discomfiture of that great enterprise by which Catherine hoped to force her way into India. Zubof, who had not received any orders, remained behind with a couple of battalions of chasseurs. He had, apparently, been forgotten, and his situation became every day more perilous. Encamped in a hostile country, at a distance of 400 miles from the Russian frontiers, with scarcely enough of troops to form the body-guard of a general to whose command such an exhibition was intrusted, he apprehended that the Persians and the Lesghis would intercept him, and cut off his retreat before any orders could reach him. Fortunately, however, they were not apprised of the evacuation of the country until after Zubof had effected his retreat, which he at last resolved to attempt, even at the risk of incurring the displeasure of the emperor. When he arrived at St. Petersburg, he resigned his commission, and his example was followed by several officers who had served under him. Thus ended this memorable invasion of Persia.

As this expedition was undertaken with the sinister view of ultimately restoring the trade of India by way of the Persian Gulf to the Euxine or the Caspian—a design which Russia has not yet abandoned, and which concerns the interests of the whole of Europe, but especially of England—it presents a proper opportunity for glancing at the views of the Russian government in reference to Persia and India, and the measures that have been so strenuously attempted, from time to time, to carry them into effect. These observations, although they are suggested at this point, will, of course, bear

equally upon the present policy and prospects of the empire in the direction of the East; and will be understood to have the same force in application to existing circumstances as to past events.

“The designs of Russia,” observes a modern writer*, “form a science of themselves, based on data collected and methodised for above 200 years, — a perfect acquaintance with the disposition, habits, and history of her neighbours; and with the resources, strength, statistics, and geography of the countries that formerly bounded her own soil, or now bound her acquisitions. Her neighbours are nearly all the important states in the world; her territory touches, or her lines or her preparations menace, every country, the name of which figures as a substantive power. There has been, therefore, a depth in the conception, and a sequence, extent, and comprehensiveness in the development, of Russian policy, that have hitherto baffled the penetration of other states. Her successes and acquisitions form a mass of facts that may well appal inquiry, which no one can sufficiently possess to generalise, and which, even if presented successfully, the public mind could not be expected to embrace or retain.” Of the designs alluded to, in the promotion of which Russia has acquired such extraordinary diplomatic intelligence, the project of annexing Persia to the empire, or of obtaining such an influence over its government as would be equivalent to a conquest, without its drawbacks and insecurity, is one of the most remarkable. It is necessarily mixed up with her policy towards Turkey, having the same ultimate object in view, — not merely the possession of Constantinople, but the attraction into her own channels of the trade of the East. A complete discussion of the entire subject, taking in all the side lights, would demand a larger compass than can be spared to it here, and would constitute a history in itself; if, indeed, all the materials for such a discussion could be procured. We propose, therefore, merely to show that,

* British and Foreign Review.

from the period when Russia emerged from a state of barbarism, and took a prominent share in the affairs of Europe, to the present time, she has never ceased to prosecute, either openly or secretly, her desire to establish a means of commercial intercourse with India. Whether she can ever accomplish that comprehensive scheme, is a question involved in such difficulty, and upon which such a variety of conjectures, and such contradictory opinions, exist, that its solution must be left to depend upon the course of events, since it has been found in theory to baffle all the sagacity that has been employed upon it for upwards of a century.

In order to exhibit the bearings of this subject clearly, it will be necessary, in the first instance, to trace the successive changes that have taken place in the routes of various nations trading to India, or with whom a commercial intercourse has been carried on by that country.

The earliest information we possess concerning India is derived from the Greeks ; but it is not only scanty, but contradictory. Alexander crossed the rivers of the Punjaub, and advanced towards the Ganges, which, however, he did not reach. At that time, a large portion of India was tributary to Persia ; but Alexander subjugated those provinces, after encountering a feeble resistance. Subsequently, the people of India were conquered by the victorious arms of the Mahometans ; next followed the invasion of the Moguls, and a long period of struggles and disorder, during which the most memorable era was the reign of the celebrated Tamerlane. His empire extended from the Irtisch and the Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to the archipelago ; and, if death had not terminated his conquests, it is not improbable that he would have added China to his enormous possessions. It was not until ninety years after the death of that extraordinary man that the discovery of the south-east passage, by the Portuguese, effected a revolution in the destinies of India, incalculably greater than all those that had previously taken place, by throwing open a better, safer,

and more easy track than any which had been known before. The Greeks, the kings of Pontus before them, and the Genoese after them, made the Crimea an emporium for the commerce of India, which was partly conveyed by the Persian Gulf, through Persia to Georgia and Imeretia, and partly through Herat to the Caspian, and up the river Kur to Georgia, from whence it was, in like manner, transported to the Phasis and the Crimea. When the Europeans began to trade with India, the principal part of their commerce was carried on by the route of the Red Sea; but, when the Saracens conquered Egypt in the seventh century, it was transferred by the Black Sea to Constantinople: they permitted the Venetians, however, to resume the former route, and Alexandria then became again the *entrepôt* of the Indian trade. To Vasco de Gama is due the merit of having discovered that line of communication between Europe and India, which the enterprise of the English subsequently enabled them to appropriate with unprecedented national advantages. After many unsuccessful voyages, persevered in through half a century, the Portuguese admiral at last doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and, coasting up the eastern shore of Africa, crossed the Indian Ocean to the coast of Malabar, where he landed at Calicut. The whole of the western coast of Hindostan was then convulsed by internal feuds, which, as well as the jealousy of the Mahometan merchants, frustrated the attempts of De Gama to enter into a commercial treaty with the natives. He therefore abandoned the project, leaving to his successors the task of profiting by his important discovery. Cabral, another Portuguese, who followed in his track, was not more fortunate; and he proceeded, in consequence, to Cochin and Cananore, two dependencies of Hindostan, which were at that juncture desirous to be emancipated from its yoke. Availing himself of these favourable circumstances, Cabral was enabled, without delay, to commence operations; and, in an incredibly short space of time, the Portuguese acquired a paramount influence

over the whole of the western coast of India. Yet they did not succeed in establishing a good port there until the year 1508, when Albuquerque arrived, and, after a violent struggle, obtained a settlement at Goa, which he fortified, and which subsequently became the point from whence they extended their commerce over the eastern seas. The Egyptians and the Venetians were the principal sufferers by this diversion of the trade of the East into a new channel; and they made several attempts (in which they were aided by some of the princes of that part of India) to drive the Portuguese from their stations. In these attempts, however, they not only failed, but contributed considerably to tempt the Portuguese into still wider conquests, until at length the routes by the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf were closed by the victors. The Indian possessions of the Portuguese were now of magnificent extent; commanding the eastern coast of Africa, the coasts of Arabia and Persia, the two peninsulas of India, the Moluccas, Ceylon, and a monopoly of the trade to China and Japan. They did not long, however, preserve this splendid dominion. The colonial power of Portugal began to decline from the time of the annexation of that country to the crown of Spain. The Dutch, who had hitherto held the carrying trade between Lisbon and the north of Europe, were no sooner dispossessed of it by Philip II., than they sought to compensate themselves for the loss by endeavouring to find a passage by the northward to India, which was now regarded as a source of inexhaustible wealth. Failing in this speculation, they opened a sanguinary war upon the Portuguese in the Indian seas; expelled them, in 1594, from Molucca and Ceylon, and from various settlements on the coast of Malabar; and, subsequently, under treaties with the native princes, founded factories at several places on the eastern coast. It was not to be expected, however, that the advantages which the commerce of India presented would remain uncontested by other maritime nations, now that a route had been

discovered, which invited the spirit and awakened the enterprise of European merchants. The English had already made several attempts to explore a passage to India: one by a north-western route, in the reign of Henry VIII.; another, by the north-east, in the reign of Edward VI.; and many more, but all alike without success. These repeated failures appear to have discouraged all further intention of seeking aggrandisement in the remote domains of Oriental wealth, until a Portuguese, more skilful and fortunate in naval adventures, discovered the passage by the south-east. This comparatively easy track to the shores of India was early attempted by the English, who were, however, unprosperous in their first expeditions, being compelled, after falling in with some Spanish men-of-war on the coast of Brazil, to return for want of provisions; and, on another occasion, suffering shipwreck, with the loss of their crews, on the coast of Spanish America. But these disasters only stimulated them to bolder and better regulated ventures; and, beginning by opening a trade with the islands of the Indian Ocean, they gradually extended their operations, until, at last, they ascended to the supreme power over that vast territory, which stretches in one direction from cape Comorin to the Himalaya mountains, and in another from the Red Sea to the Birman empire; extending into between twenty and thirty degrees of latitude, and, in some places, nearly the same number of degrees of longitude.*

* Mill's British India. Thornton's India, its State and Prospects. It may not be out of place to observe here that the discovery of steam navigation has reopened the question of communication with India, and will eventually lead to the restoration of the ancient route by the Red Sea. The usual route to India from England, by the Cape of Good Hope, being, on many accounts, ill adapted for the employment of steam, a variety of suggestions, originating both in India and England, have been made with a view to shorten the distance, by expediting the passage. One of these was, to proceed up the Rhine, down the Danube, across the Black Sea, overland to the Euphrates; down that river to Bassora, and thence to Bombay. The objections to this proposal were, the transit through Austria, which would expose our merchants to the inconvenience of a police surveillance; the risk of an interruption on the Danube, which is generally impassable during a part of the winter; the fact that the mouth of that river is in the possession of Russia; the difficult nature of the journey from the farther side of the Black Sea, which lies through an exceedingly moun-

From this sketch of the different lines of transit to and from India, it will be seen that in former times two routes were traversed, either of which would be favourable to the projects of Russia in that direction. But the transitions to which India had been exposed by foreign aggression finally closed them ; and, subsequently to the date of the discovery of the south-east passage by the Portuguese, they ceased to be resorted to, except by straggling caravans of Oozbeks and Bokharians from the north of India or Kandabar, which, from time to time, deposited their insignificant merchandise in the ports of the Caspian, or in some of the towns on the Russian frontiers. Peter the Great was not slow to discover the importance of the trade with India, which had always been esteemed as a certain source of wealth to the nations which participated in it ; and his first military expedition was an attempt, by possessing himself of a port on the sea of Azof, to draw back the commerce of the East into its old channels. When he ascended the throne, in 1689, Russia had no commercial seaport, except that of Archangel. Peter, in his enterprise on the borders of the sea of Azof in 1695, proposed to make Taganreg the emporium of a traffic from which he anticipated unbounded opulence would flow upon the empire. But the war with Turkey, terminating in the disasters of the Pruth, and the treaty, or more properly capitulation,

tainous country ; and the certainty of a suspension of communication in the event of an European war. To meet these objections, in part, the proposal was modified, by substituting for the route through Austria a voyage direct to Constantinople, through the Mediterranean, and from thence across the Black Sea to Trebizond, and so on, as before, to the Euphrates. But the land journey was still laborious and inconvenient. Other modes of approaching the Euphrates have been suggested ; but, as they all depended upon the solution of the problem, whether the river itself was practicable, it is unnecessary to detail them. Unfortunately, after a very large expenditure, wasted upon experiments, it does not appear that the Euphrates can ever be rendered available ; so that all the speculations in reference to it have been already laid aside. The route finally decided upon, and to be ultimately adopted, is by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The simplicity and completeness of this line, for all purposes, and its great facilities of approach to both the western and eastern coasts of India, at once point it out as the best which, with our present means and knowledge, we could embrace. See *State of the Question as to Steam Navigation*, &c., by Captain Melville Grindlay.

of Falksen, compelled him to abandon his conquest, and, after two years of evasion, which proved his reluctance to forego this favourite project, he surrendered Azof and Taganrog. He was not, however, deterred, by this unfortunate issue of his first adventure, from resuming the project on a subsequent opportunity ; and, in 1718, he sent an embassy to Persia, the object of which was to improve his commercial relations with that country, and to establish a trade with India. Upon this occasion, an arrangement was entered into for the transmission to Russia of the whole of the silk exported from Persia ; but the plan of opening a communication with India failed, although, nearly half a century before, a Russian agent had penetrated to the court of Aurungzebe ; and Russian traders, even in the reign of Peter, had established themselves in different parts of Hindostan. The difficulty of effecting this ultimate aim appears to have been so great, that nothing less than a succession of wars, and acts of the deepest perfidy, formed the machinery by which Peter hoped at last to accomplish it. Thus, we find him constantly engaged, on the slightest pretexts, and frequently without any, either in measures of hostility or negotiation, in battles or intrigues, on the Persian side of his dominions ; always taking advantage of the weakness of the shah, arising from the domestic troubles of the country, to advance his acquisitions eastward. In 1722, he embarked in an expedition under the pretence of assisting the shah against his rebellious subjects, but, in reality, to profit by the dissensions that prevailed in the country ; terminating his friendly interference by appropriating to himself the rich provinces of Ghilan and Daghistan. Such was the helpless condition of the Persian monarch, and such the duplicity of the Russian diplomatists, that the latter made it appear that the military movements in these quarters were undertaken with the most amicable intentions, while the former was induced to supplicate the czar for farther help against his enemies. Thus early were the objects of Russia in the East promoted by the ignorance which has since con-

tinued to make other powers the dupes and instruments of her aggrandisement. The ambassador appointed by the shah to solicit additional succours was easily persuaded, or, according to some authorities, bribed, to acquiesce in any terms which the czar might think proper to propose. His master was a prisoner at Ispahan, in the hands of the Afghans; and he probably believed that his responsibility was not very serious, or that, in submitting to the will of Russia, he was serving a more powerful interest than that which he virtually represented. The treaty which he concluded with Peter, in the name of the shah, ceded to that monarch not only the Persian provinces he had seized upon, but also Mazanderan and Astrabad, which he had not yet approached, and Schamachy, which was then in the possession of the Turks, but which the Russians were to acquire for themselves. The only condition to which Peter was bound, in return for these extensive cessions, was to march an army into Persia to the assistance of the shah. The provinces which were thus surrendered to Russia were those which the policy of the Russian cabinet had all throughout desired to secure,—the whole of the coast that Persia possessed in the Caspian, and all those districts that produced the silk which Peter was anxious to monopolise. That the shah never authorised his ambassador to propose or to agree to such terms, and that they were, therefore, drawn up by Peter himself, is sufficiently proved by two facts: first, that the cession included the whole of the only portion of Persia which remained to the shah, the rest being occupied by the Turks, the Afghans, and Malik Mahmood, an adventurer from Siestan, which renders it wholly incredible, as well as absurd, to suppose that the shah had ever contemplated such a cession, amounting to the surrender of his kingdom, as the price of its preservation; and, secondly, that the shah not only disavowed the treaty, but actually sent troops against the Russians to prevent them from carrying it into execution. Peter, however, who never fulfilled his part of the treaty, and who was, therefore, disentitled to exact the remainder,

persisted in holding the conquered provinces, and opened a negotiation with the Porte for the purpose of dividing the spoils, and defining the Turkish and Russian frontiers in Persia. His death, in 1725, interrupted, but did not set aside, this negotiation, which was brought to a conclusion by Catherine I., between whom and the Porte the frontiers of the three countries were finally settled, in such a way as to leave to Russia the provinces ceded to her by the treaty, which the shah refused to acknowledge, and to which he never was a party.* His remonstrances against this act of gross injustice only exposed him to still worse consequences. Russia, finding it impossible to establish herself in Mazanderan and Astrabad, the only provinces that remained in the possession of the shah, opened a negotiation with the Afghans, and, relinquishing her claims to these districts, procured from the chief of the rebels a recognition of her right to Ghilan and Daghistan, — the very places which were ceded to her on condition that she would assist in expelling the Afghans from the kingdom.

This double treachery, however, proved eventually useless to Russia. She found that it was impracticable, under the then existing circumstances, to bring about an intercourse with India, which was the principal object of her ambition in these movements. The wars that raged through the intervening countries presented an insuperable obstacle to her progress ; in addition to which, the licentiousness of her soldiers, their oppression of the natives, and the contempt which they exhibited for the religious ceremonies of the Persians, produced such an under-current of resistance as rendered it impossible for her to retain her conquests. In this exigency, Russia availed herself of the successful rebellion of Nadir Kooly (a freebooter of Khorassan, who rose against the feeble shah, and, deposing him, took the reins of government into his own hand), to relinquish her Persian

* Voltaire takes it for granted that Persia recognised this treaty, notwithstanding the remarkable proofs we have cited to the contrary.

possessions, which she was gradually compelled to abandon by the victorious advances of that chieftain. A treaty was concluded by Nadir Kooly with Turkey and with Russia, by which the latter power engaged to withdraw her flag from the sea of Azof, and the ancient boundaries of Persia were restored. For a time, therefore, the projects of Russian aggrandisement in that quarter were abandoned.

The internal troubles of the empire called off the the attention of the immediate successors of Peter the Great from this favourite object. They were too much engaged with the revolutions that threatened the safety of the crown, as well as with their new relations in Europe, to resume their operations in the East. The empress Anne contented herself with an easy trade with the northern provinces of Persia ; and, during the reign of Elizabeth, oriental affairs were wholly neglected. We have seen what was attempted by Catherine, and its failure. Her insidious policy in placing a creature of her own on the throne of Georgia, for the purpose of maintaining her influence through him ; and her subsequent invasion of Persia, under the pretext of asserting the claims of a banished prince ; were as unfortunate in their results as they were expensive in their progress. But the ill success of these repeated attempts to acquire an ascendancy in Persia does not appear to have checked the perseverance of the Russians. The grand design was suspended only to be renewed, at a future period, with greater vigour and success. It will be useful here to anticipate the order of time, for the sake of showing the continuity of Russian policy in the East, which is necessary to a complete view of the subject.

Heraclius of Georgia died in 1798, and was succeeded by his son Goorgheen Khan, to whom Heraclius willed the crown. The new sovereign was not long permitted to enjoy the throne in peace, a rebellion being organised by his brother Alexander, who, supported by the Lesghis, prepared to dispute his right to the kingdom. Goorgheen applied to the Russians for succours, and, as usual,

they interfered to profit by his misfortunes. Alexander fled before their superior force; and, taking refuge for a time in the Caucasus, at length effected his escape into Persia. As Russia never extended her protection to any nation without gaining something in the end, so on this occasion she put a price upon her friendship, which eventually deprived Georgia of its independence, and annexed it to the Russian empire. Paul, upon the grounds of composing the differences that had arisen in that kingdom, issued an ukase in 1800, by which he incorporated Georgia with his own dominions. Catherine was satisfied with guaranteeing the crown, under the shelter of her arms, to Heraclius and his heirs for ever; but Paul, always desirous of contradicting or exceeding her views, annulled that measure, and took possession of the state she had promised to defend. The unfortunate prince Goorgheen died of a broken heart in his capital, and his widow was compelled by force to leave the kingdom.* Such was the position of

* The cruelty of the Russian government in the measures they adopted for appropriating Georgia to themselves may be illustrated by their conduct to the unfortunate queen Maria, widow of Goorgheen, or, as he is called in some instruments, George XI. After the death of her husband, which took place on December 28. 1800, she continued to reside at Teflis, with her seven young children; but the feelings exhibited towards her by Zizianoff (who was related to her) and the Russian authorities, induced her to contemplate a project of escape, in which she was assisted by certain mountaineers of the Caucasus, dwelling near the sources of the Jora (Cambyes), to the north-east of Teflis. The plan, however, was betrayed to Zizianoff by an emissary attached to her person; and, when it was nearly ripe for execution, general Lazareff was directed to convey her out of the kingdom into Russia. He entered her apartment early in the morning, having brought two companies of infantry to the door, for the purpose of forcing her to set out. She was awake, and seated, after the Turkish fashion, on her divan; but her children were yet asleep around her. Lazareff approached her disrespectfully; and, after an abrupt conversation, he stooped down to seize her by the leg; when she drew a dagger which belonged to her husband, and which she had concealed under her eider-down cushions, and stabbed him with such force in the left side, that the weapon came out of the other side. He expired on the spot. But her virtuous indignation at the insults she had suffered availed her nothing. The soldiers rushed in: the queen was struck several times with a drawn sword, and beaten with muskets, and was thus driven out bleeding from her house. A considerable armed force accompanied her on her melancholy journey; and the Georgians, running after her carriage, testified by their tears the regret they felt at her exile. When the queen arrived in Russia, she was confined in a monastery. For the details of this tragical story (a sad and fitful theme for poetry), see "*Itinéraire de Teflis à Constantinople, par le Colonel Rottiers.*" Colonel Rottiers was a Dutch officer in the service of Russia, and took down the relation of these events from

affairs in Georgia, the key to the Persian realm, on the death of Paul.

The emperor Alexander, immediately after his accession to the throne, confirmed the ukase of his father, and took still more decided steps to carry it into force. He affected a desire to restore the previous form of government, and to maintain the integrity of the crown, in the line of Heraclius; but, declaring that no means could be found for preserving tranquillity if that course were adopted, he pretended to attach the kingdom to his empire for the sake of the Georgians themselves.* The words of his ukase, dated the 24th of September, 1801, are memorable for their duplicity. He asserted that he decided upon this proceeding, "not," he said, "for the aggrandisement of our power, not with interested views, but merely to establish justice, and the security of persons and property. All the taxes paid by your country shall be employed for your own advantage, and in the re-establishment of your ruined towns and villages. Your happiness and welfare will be the most agreeable, and the only, reward for us!" The manner in which these professions were fulfilled sufficiently testifies to their insincerity.

General Zizianoff, a renegade Georgian, was appointed governor-general and commander-in-chief of the provinces beyond the Caucasus. He commenced his administration by marching his troops into Mingrelia, which submitted without resistance; and by an expedition against the fortress of Ganja, which he took by assault. In 1804, the governor of Erivan rebelled against the authority of the shah, and solicited the assistance of the

the lips of father Onissime, of the chapel of St. George, adjoining the house where the queen was arrested. He was an eyewitness of all that passed; and the spectacle made so profound an impression upon him, that, ten years afterwards, he could hardly allude to it without a feeling of terror, "and," said Rottiers, "tears in his eyes."

* The flatterers of Alexander have interpreted his conduct on this occasion into an evidence of his virtue and magnanimity. "He agreed," says Mr. Lloyd, in his *Life of Alexander*, "to the union of the country with Russia"—as if it were done to promote the happiness of the Georgians!

Russians in making war upon his master. This assistance was readily granted, as it served to increase the dissensions through which the court of St. Petersburg hoped ultimately to subjugate Persia, although it was then, and had been for some years, at peace with that power. Zizianoff, at the head of a formidable army, advanced towards Erivan; defeated the Persians in a pitched battle; and invested the fortress he had come ostensibly to succour. A variety of disasters, however, compelled him to retreat; and the rebellious governor surrendered the place to the shah. But Zizianoff still persevered in his military operations; reduced the province of Shekee, in the spring of 1805, and shortly afterwards placed a garrison in Karabaugh. Pushing forwards in the winter to Badkoo, which had thrown off the protection of Russia, his successes were suddenly terminated by assassination, while he was attending a conference to which he was invited at the last-mentioned place. The harassing and perfidious conduct of Russia at length induced the shah to appeal to Napoleon, who was then at the height of his power, and a treaty of alliance was concluded between them at Finkenstein in May, 1807.* This was the first time that Persia became connected with European policy; as, previously to the application made to Napoleon in 1805, she was scarcely known to the governments of Europe.† The Persian government, however, did not apply to France until she had solicited help from the British authorities in India in vain. An envoy was sent to India; but, his mission proving unsuccessful, the shah had no alternative but to throw himself into the arms of France. Napoleon gladly availed himself of the opportunity which the exigencies of Persia offered to him of cultivating an influence in the East, as a means of shaking the power of England

* By this treaty, the invasion of India was actually decided upon, and general Gardanne was sent by Napoleon to the shah to forward the details of its execution.

† So little was known concerning Persia at the court of Paris, that some doubts were entertained whether the ambassador the shah was really entitled to the rank he assumed; and M. Jaubert was sent to Teheran to ascertain the situation of the country, and the quality of the individual.

in Europe, by assailing her through her Indian dominions. An embassy was accordingly sent to the court of Teheran, which was reciprocated by brilliant presents to Napoleon. French officers were appointed to commands in the Persian army, and European discipline was introduced into its ranks. Regular fortifications were now raised in Persia, under the superintendence of French engineers; and the kingdom of the shah, growing up rapidly into importance, partly by its immediate connection with the British dependencies, and partly by the interest manifested in its behalf by the French court, was drawn into the calculations of all those cabinets which had hitherto regarded it with indifference. From that time to the present, Persia has become inseparably mixed up with the policy of Europe. It was no longer possible to limit her influence to Asia. The line had been obliterated which separated her from Europe; and, so long as Russia maintains her military force, and continues to extend her territories eastward, and while England retains her sovereignty in India, the independence of Persia must be an object of incessant jealousy to both: to Russia, as being the most formidable impediment to her ulterior designs; and to England, as being indispensable to the preservation of her Oriental conquests.

The ascendancy which the French obtained in the counsels of the shah produced, on the part of Great Britain, considerable anxiety to repair the error that had been originally committed, in refusing assistance to Persia; and a distinguished minister* was appointed by the Indian government on a mission to the court of Teheran, with a view to establish friendly relations with that power. But the influence of the French rendered his negotiations useless; and he returned to India without effecting his object: nor was it until an ambassador† was despatched from the court of London to represent the king of England, that the French embassy was

* Sir John Malcolm.

† Sir Harford Jones.

obliged to retire from Teheran; a measure which was greatly accelerated by its inability to perform the promises with which it had won the confidence of the shah. The favourable reception of the English ambassador was confirmed by a preliminary treaty between the crowns of Great Britain and Persia; upon which occasion a Persian ambassador was sent to London, the first that had visited that capital for nearly 200 years. A definitive treaty was concluded, in 1811*, on the basis of these engagements: British officers replaced the French in the armies of the shah, who was then involved in a war with Russia; and in the meanwhile that European convulsion which brought Russia and France into direct collision led insensibly to the establishment of friendly relations between Great Britain and Russia. The final result of these circumstances was the conclusion of a peace between Persia and her border enemy, which was ratified at Gorhitan, in the province of Karabaugh, in 1814. By this treaty Persia was a severe sufferer, purchasing tranquillity at such a cost of dominion as to threaten, from its weakness, the dismemberment of the remainder. To Russia was ceded all her acquisitions south of the Caucasus, including Mingrelia, Georgia, Immeretia, Derbent, Badkoo, Daghistan, Sheerwan, Shekee, Ganja, Karabaugh, and parts of Moghan and Talish, the shah engaging not to maintain a navy in the Caspian; Russia undertaking, on the other hand, to support the succession of Abbas Mirza, to whose court at Tabreez, a chargé d'affaires was immediately sent, and remained there until his death.† But the circumstances attending this transaction displayed such perfidy on the part of the Russian government, that, had Persia been able to resist its fulfilment, she would have been justified in doing so by the law of nations. The basis

* Sir Gore Ouseley was appointed ambassador extraordinary on this occasion.

† In violation of the part which the English ambassador, sir G. Ouseley, took in this treaty, with a view to prevent the march of the troops, &c., secret articles were added, by the recent treaty of Turcomankchai, by which the shah is bound to provide supplies *should a Russian army at any time have occasion to march through Persia.*

of the negotiation was this: that the provinces in the possession of each party at the date of the termination of hostilities should be confirmed to them by the treaty. Under this arrangement, Russia claimed a considerable part of the khanat, or lordship, of Talish, upon the ground that she then held a garrison in Lankeran; but the Persian plenipotentiary refused to accept the basis unless Talish were excluded, as that district lay on the confines of Ghilan, which the Russians had exhibited, on former occasions, so ardent a desire to possess, and which it became, therefore, the more necessary to protect by a clear frontier line. To this proposition the Russian plenipotentiary objected, that his instructions were peremptory, making the adoption of that basis a *sine qua non*; but he pledged himself, at the same time, that, if the Persian minister would accept it, he would prevail upon his court to obtain the restitution of Talish as an act of grace, and even promised that he would endeavour to procure the restoration of other provinces. The British ambassador, who was present during these negotiations, was so assured of the apparent sincerity of the Russian plenipotentiary, that he interposed his good offices, undertaking that his government would exert its influence with the court of St. Petersburg, with a view to the adjustment of the stipulation respecting the disputed territory. The Persian plenipotentiary was easily induced to rely upon these statements; but, notwithstanding the subsequent interference of lord Cathcart, the British minister at the court of Russia, and the solicitations of the Persian embassy, the emperor refused to relinquish a single foot of ground; dismissing the question by a reference to his ambassador at Teheran, who, he said, was authorised to discuss it with the Persian ministers. The reference, however, was a mere evasion; for, when the Russian ambassador was applied to on the subject, he insisted upon the maintenance of the treaty; and so Russia remained in possession of all her acquisitions. The extent of country which she has altogether wrested from Persia (to which we may add

the kirghis horde, which she took under her protection in 1829, thus opening for her commerce a secure road to Bokhara and the central states of Asia,) which she holds at this moment, and which must be considered as so much gained on the road towards India, is equal to the superficies of England.

CHAP. IV.

EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE PRACTICABILITY OF A RUSSIAN INVASION OF INDIA. — RUSSIA THE ONLY EUROPEAN STATE THAT COULD INVADE INDIA. — THE TWO MODES BY WHICH SHE MIGHT PROCEED. — IMPORTANCE OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS A KEY TO THE EAST. — ARTIFICES OF RUSSIA TO CONCEAL HER DESIGNS ON TURKEY. — IMMEDIATE RESULTS THAT WOULD ENSUE UPON THE CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE. — REVIEW OF THE TRACK THROUGH CENTRAL ASIA TO THE BANKS OF THE INDUS. — INTERNAL STATE AND RESOURCES OF PERSIA. — IMPORTANCE OF HERAT AS A DEPÔT FOR THE OPERATIONS OF RUSSIA. — PROBABILITY OF THE GRADUAL SUBJUGATION OF PERSIA, FOLLOWED BY THE OCCUPATION OF HERAT AND THE CONQUEST OF BOKHARA, KHIVA, AND AFGHANISTAN. — MILITARY TOPOGRAPHY OF PERSIA. — DEFECTIVE POLICY OF ENGLAND IN ASIA. — NECESSITY OF FORMING AN ALLIANCE WITH THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE BRITISH POWER IN INDIA.

THE preceding review of the direct attempts that have been made by Russia, to penetrate into Persia with the ultimate design of pursuing her victories to India, sufficiently develops the existence of the desire to effect that object. The question whether Russia possesses the means of accomplishing that desire — whether the obstacles in her path are of a nature to render an expedition of that sort hopeless — and whether she could at any time secure such a position in Asia, as would enable her to prepare at leisure and in security for the vigorous conduct of so vast an enterprize, has been productive of considerable discussion, and led to no slight difference of opinion amongst military authorities, as well as experienced travellers in the East. The practicability of a Russian invasion of India does not,

however, admit of much doubt. The discussions that have taken place upon this subject throughout the entire press of Europe, for many years past, have developed the measures that might be successfully adopted for vanquishing the intermediate impediments; and the most remarkable man of modern times, who had deeply weighed the probabilities of both sides, did not hesitate to assert his conviction, that Russia might, under certain circumstances, dispossess England of her Eastern empire.* The possibility of achieving such a conquest must not, however, be confounded with its likelihood; for although it is placed beyond all doubt, that Russia, notwithstanding her failures in that direction, has never abandoned the project of attracting to her own ports, the trade of the East, and that the difficulties which embarrass it are by no means insuperable, yet, even if her movements should be crowned with uninterrupted triumphs, and her dexterous policy should deceive for a time the cabinets of Europe, it would require so long a period to mature her plans, that her purpose could not wholly escape detection, so that in any event an interval would be obtained for strengthening in the last resort, the frontiers of India. But the wiser and easier course would be to prevent the threatened invasion, by securing the independence of those Asiatic nations, that lie between the Russian possessions, south of the Caucasus and the Indus†; nor, indeed, has it altogether escaped attention, the minister who hitherto represented

* Napoleon saw the projects of Russia, more clearly than any other European sovereign. He was never deceived by her agents, and always resisted their dangerous suggestions.

† "As Russia has encroached, and will continue to encroach," observes lieut.-col. Chesney, "upon the weaker countries situated upon her Asiatic frontiers, until some power of equal strength shall be opposed to her progress, the time seems to be nearly arrived when it becomes of infinite importance to consider whether we should take any, and if so, what steps, to arrest the natural march of the Scythians towards the attractive regions which lure them irresistibly to the south-east; whether, in short, it is in our power, by a little judicious expense, and by diplomatic exertions in Persia, to keep the country out of the hands of Russia, and thus avoid a comparatively enormous expence in having to adopt the alternative of making a barrier in Afghanistan, with a great increase of European troops to support it on our western and northern frontiers."—*Observations on Persia as an Ally*, &c., drawn up in 1833.

the Indian government at Tehran, having been withdrawn from that capital, and his place supplied by an ambassador accredited direct from the British court. But something more than this is required on the part of Great Britain; it would be essential to cultivate other alliances than that of Persia, on that great tract of country; and by establishing the influence of her name throughout the numerous tribes that inhabit it, and to whom she is at present scarcely known, or known only by her connexion with Hindostan, to give them an interest on her side in any war which the ambition of the autocrat might foment in that quarter. It cannot be concealed that the English government has strangely neglected the protection of the north-western boundary of India, and that, until very lately, scarcely any attempts worthy of record, were made to explore central Asia, even with a view to the illustration of its geography. The ignorance that has prevailed upon this subject, is attested by a traveller*, whose researches confer imperishable honour upon the government†, under whose paternal auspices they were promoted, and entitle the intrepid and persevering discoverer to the lasting gratitude of his country. That the French and the Russians should possess a more intimate knowledge of the natives bordering on India, than the English, who are so deeply interested in the inquiry, is almost incredible; and the fact is rendered still more surprising in reference to those important questions of foreign policy in which, not England alone, but all the European cabinets are concerned, and which have an immediate bearing upon the state of Asia.

The invasion of India—should such an enterprise ever be attempted—can be made only by Russia. She is the only European state whose position would enable her, with the slightest prospect of success, to embark in such an undertaking. She alone possesses a frontier in

* Captain Burnes.

† It was during lord William Bentinck's administration, and at his suggestion, that captain Burnes' mission into Bokhara was undertaken.

Asia, and she alone is brought into contact with those Asiatic races, who are remote from the sympathies of other countries ; whose feuds and revolutions are scarcely heard of beyond the confines of their own territories ; and who, therefore, might be subjugated from time to time, almost without the knowledge of the kingdoms of Europe. While other nations, therefore, might form alliances with the princes of central Asia, and even establish a species of floating influence at their courts, Russia alone exercises a direct and constant check upon their power, and can alone make herself be felt through their distant provinces. It is hardly necessary to show, that an invasion of India by any of the Asiatic powers is not only in the last degree improbable, but utterly impossible. That such adventures were successful in former times, is matter of history ; but they furnish no data for any such speculations in the future. The leaders, under whose banners they were accomplished, were generally men of great military powers—each the genius of his age—who had subdued all the neighbouring countries, and the fame of whose achievements, preceding them on their rapid progress, in most cases, ensured submission as they advanced. The armies they commanded were composed of more experienced and skilful troops than those they had to encounter ; and these advantages were further enhanced by the internal weakness of the Indian princes, the dissensions of the people, and the want of the spirit, as well as the power, of union, for the common safety. Such enterprises were usually concluded by a *coup de main* ; the surrender of a garrison, or the capture of the seat of government, decided the conquest of a kingdom. But the circumstances no longer exist, under which such a warfare could be carried on ; and the military strength of India is invulnerable to the approaches of these hordes, who have retrograded, nearly in an equal proportion, as Hindostan has advanced. It may, therefore, be at once assumed, that the invasion of India could not be attempted, with the least prospect of success, by any power, except Russia.

The next inquiry is, what are her means of carrying it into effect?

There are two modes, by which Russia might penetrate to India:—First, by the conquest of Constantinople, which would give her, as from a central citadel, the command both of Europe and of Asia; and second, by traversing the countries lying directly between her Asiatic frontier, and the north-western boundary of India. It will be requisite to examine them respectively.

First:—The importance of the acquisition of Constantinople, which has been the dream of Russian aggrandizement from the earliest age, is obvious. Gibbon observes, that “the promontory of Thrace, which stretches into the Propontis, and is placed between two seas, was, unquestionably, the most eligible situation in Europe for founding a city, which might aspire to universal dominion.” Authorities might very readily be accumulated, to show the vastness of the power which the possession of Constantinople would give to Russia, apart from the question to which we confine ourselves at present. Constantinople threatens Germany, Italy, and France, while it is vulnerable only from the Black Sea, which is but a *cul-de-sac*, so long as Turkey holds the Dardanelles. The great lord Chatham, even at a time when the projects of Russia were but faintly developed, said, “With the man who cannot appreciate the interests of England in the preservation of the Ottoman empire, *I will not argue.*” The possession of the Dardanelles, would give to Russia the means of acquiring an almost unlimited marine force. It would enable her to prepare her armaments in the Black Sea without the probability of interference, or, perhaps, of the knowledge of any European power; and, as an effective blockade of the Dardanelles, could not be maintained throughout the year (for which assertion we have the highest naval authorities) it would, at any time, be in the power of Russia, to throw the whole weight of her disposable forces on any point of the Mediterranean, so as to command that sea for any period she might deem

necessary. Thus, she would acquire an influence in the south of Europe, as great as that which she at present exercises in the north ; and her southern frontier (at present the most accessible) being thus placed beyond the reach of attack, she would be at liberty to direct into other channels, the large military force which is now employed along the shores of the Black Sea. Hitherto, England has exerted a constant check over Russia, by the power which she possesses of destroying her commerce ; but that check would be at once counterbalanced by the occupation of Constantinople, which would enable her to limit the commerce of England, and extend and protect her own. It would give her a complete supremacy over central Asia. "All disaffection," says an able writer *, "in the Crimea, the Caucasus, Circassia, and Georgia, would be subdued for ever, by the conquest of Constantinople ; because all hope of successful resistance, all possibility of obtaining succour from without, would be at once extinguished. Persia, for the same reason, would cease to be an independent kingdom. Greece, with its islands, would be but a province of Russia. The road to India would then be open to her, with all Asia at her back." When the emperors Alexander and Napoleon met at Erfurth, to divide Europe between themselves, into two equal portions, it was the question of Constantinople that made the latter pause. Egypt, the long-cherished project of France, was conceded to Napoleon, and the lion's share of Europe, if he would surrender Constantinople to Russia.† "The hero of Austerlitz," observes a French

* Quarterly Review.

† We have a very curious, and, on account of the channel through which it came, a very remarkable confirmation of this fact, in a speech which was delivered in the chamber of deputies, in the beginning of 1834. M. Bignon, referring to the policy of Russia, observed, that "in 1808, immediately previous to the interview at Erfurth, at that period of strict intimacy between the cabinets of Paris and St. Petersburg, a period in which the ambition of the two emperors frankly dispensed with every show of hypocrisy, Alexander insisted, with incredible vivacity, on the total partition of the Ottoman empire, which Napoleon resisted. To tempt the French cabinet, the offers of Russia were immense. Beyond the unreserved abandonment, by Russia to France, of the Spanish and Italian peninsulas ; beyond the admission, as a right acquired, of the ascendancy

writer *, “ at the head of France, of the empire, did not dare to abandon Constantinople to the pacific Alexander.” The Dardanelles is a vital question for Russia, was the remark of M. Nesselrode. “ It is the key of my house,” was the emphatic observation of the emperor Alexander. Napoleon, in his exile, frequently referred to this subject ; and some of his commentaries upon it are of the last importance. “ Alexander’s thoughts,” he is reported to have said †, “ are directed to the conquest of Turkey. We have had many discussions about it. At first, I was pleased with his proposals, because I thought it would enlighten the world to drive these brutes, the Turks, out of Europe. But when I reflected upon the consequences, and saw what a tremendous weight of power it would give to Russia in consequence of the number of Greeks in the Turkish dominions who would naturally join the Russians, I refused to consent to it, especially as Alexander wanted to get Constantinople, which I would not allow, as it would have destroyed the equilibrium of power in Europe. I reflected that France would gain Egypt, Syria, and the islands, which would have been nothing in comparison with what Russia would have obtained. I considered that the barbarians of the north were already too powerful, and, probably, in the course of time, would overwhelm all Europe, as I now think they will. Austria already

of France over Germany, she allowed Napoleon to choose from the greater portion of the Turkish empire what would be most convenient. — Albania, Bosnia, the Morea, and the islands (to which Napoleon himself adds Syria and Egypt), she even offered to furnish troops for their conquest. But on the other hand, in the lot of Russia, Alexander required *Constantinople and the Dardanelles*. He declared that ‘ Constantinople will be for me but a provincial town — geography gives it to me!’ As to the passage of the Dardanelles, he said, ‘ *It is necessary that I should hold the key of my house!*’ Although Napoleon was then completely bent on Spain, and although he attached the utmost importance to the Russian alliance — important, not only against England, but also against Austria, which was then arming — the demand appeared so exorbitant that he never would agree to it.” The effect of this revelation in the chamber of deputies in Paris, and from thence circulated all over Europe, may be readily conceived.

* See the Introduction prefixed to the French translation of “ England, France, Russia, and Turkey.”

† O’Meara’s “ Napoleon in Exile.”

trembles ; Russia and Prussia united, Austria falls, and England cannot prevent it. France, under the present family, is nothing ; Austria can offer little resistance to the Russians, who are brave and potent. Russia is the more formidable because she can never disarm ; in Russia, once a soldier always a soldier. Barbarians who, one may say, have no country, and to whom every country is better than the one that gave them birth." In some points this opinion, gravely as it estimates the value of Constantinople to Russia, is erroneous, and appears to have been formed upon imperfect data. Napoleon seems to have regarded the possession of Constantinople as being important to Russia only in reference to continental Europe, without any reference to the dominion it would give her over Mahometan Asia, or the protection it would bestow upon her hitherto vulnerable and insecure frontiers, or the fact that she, and not France, would, through Constantinople, acquire Egypt, Syria, and the islands. His opinion of the Turks was also erroneous, and was probably derived from the delusion which to Russian government industriously spread throughout Europe concerning them, and which is only now gradually vanishing before the light of more authentic information. The importance to France of the independence of the Ottoman empire seems to have escaped the discernment of Napoleon. It is as essential to France to sustain Turkey as it is to England. In the Black Sea England is supported by France ; and by a firm union they might oppose to Russia the whole body of the Ottoman power, rendering useless to her those territories she has acquired since 1774, and detaching from her and neutralising her subservient allies. Thus England would obtain the co-operation of France, which would be impossible on the Indus ; and France the co-operation of England, which she will not obtain on the Rhine.* But the speculations of Russia in reference to France have not

* England, France, Russia, and Turkey.

been so carefully concealed, but that the ministers of the latter power might have detected them. The Russian government have betrayed their ultimate conspiracy against the European system through their own organs, one of which*, within the last few years, has spoken openly of the coalition of the three powers, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, for the partition of Turkey, that they might travel “by Constantinople to Paris.” The most conclusive evidence, however, of the inextinguishable desire of Russia to possess this important position is to be found in the extraordinary pains she has taken to deceive Europe upon the subject, and to disseminate a belief that the occupation of Constantinople would weaken her resources and divert her from her legitimate objects. One specimen of this injurious sophistry will be sufficient as an illustration of the craftiness with which she has invariably prosecuted this grand object. A large portion of the German press is notoriously in the pay of Russia, and we discover occasionally in its columns certain feelers which are palpably put forth by the Russian cabinet for the purpose of misleading the European public. In a Wurtemberg journal†, there recently appeared an article the design of which was to show that the conquest of Constantinople would divert Russia from her real aim — the acquisition of India. The true way to interpret this is, to put upon it the very contrary construction to that which it appears to bear ; namely, that the conquest of Constantinople would secure to Russia her real aim, the acquisition of India. The boldness with which the writer follows up the argument is remarkable. He observes that the conquest of Constantinople would entirely draw Russia from the object which her military power and her geographical position point out to her, supremacy over Asia, and the speedy acquisition of India ; because “she would have to exert the entire efforts of her colossal expansion to defend points against the European powers, probably Austria

* The St. Petersburg Gazette.

† The German Courier, September 28th, 1836.

included, which, although of high importance in themselves, are still very disproportionate to the immeasurable advantages that are to be acquired in Asia. By such a course," he continues, "her power towards the East would be checked. If Constantinople were ever taken, still its possession must be maintained by constant wars, and by extension to the eastern and southern coasts of the Mediterranean, where England, France, and Austria would follow every step, and might wage war for each important point." The glaring fallacy of this statement is so transparent, that it is amazing the cabinet of St. Petersburg should have suffered it to be published. But if we pursue this writer's observations, we shall discover clearly enough, not only the development of the meditated plan for an invasion of India, but the means that would be promptly made use of *after* the occupation of Constantinople. "Russia," he observes, "would augment her power and her dominion under much more favouring circumstances, if she were to apply her exertions in the direct route to India. Here no European power can follow her; and, once arrived at the goal, it would only be necessary to engage England in a war, the issue of which could not be doubtful, in order to place the entire destinies of the world in the emperor's hands, and the commerce of the world in the hands of the Russian nation. Bombay might as well be in the possession of Russia without the necessity of its causing a division in the empire, as it is at present in the possession of England, without injury to the national unity of Great Britain. But the possession of Constantinople would threaten Moscow and St. Petersburg with a southern Greek empire. In the south, Russia's influence would be continually secured by the affection of the Greek catholic population, and would thereby support the conquests to be made in Asia. The means assigned as specially necessary to the proposed end, are the undisputed possession of the coasts of the Caspian, and the passes and mountains of the Caucasus, a preponderating influence in Persia, and

the emigration of the Christian populations of central Asia into the Russian provinces, secured by conquest from Persia and Turkey." These are clearly the means that would be resorted to *after* the fall of Constantinople, and which, it is not necessary to add, would be incalculably accelerated by that circumstance. The document from which we have derived this revelation of the secret policy of Russia is rendered still more curious and authoritative by the fact, that it is founded exclusively on a memoir which was presented to the emperor a few years ago by a Russian statesman, general Yermaloff, who had ample opportunities of forming an accurate opinion on the subject.*

* If more direct proofs were necessary to show that Russia looks earnestly to the future subjugation of India, and that she does not scruple to avow her intentions, they might be readily obtained in the publications of those organs that are well known to be the representatives of her opinions. In a country where the press is subjected to so severe a censorship, and where, in truth, it dare not utter any sentiments but such as are approved of by the government, its revelations possess an importance that cannot be attached to the labours of journalism any where else. The audacity of the insults which the Russian press casts upon other nations—especially upon England, who is hated for her freedom, as well as for her maritime supremacy—may be estimated by the following passage, extracted from a journal which is the immediate organ of the cabinet of St. Petersburg. This paragraph is also remarkable for the explicitness of its avowal of the policy of Russia, in reference to India. "The Russian nation is indignant at the clandestine proceedings of England, or rather of her perfidious ministry, in regard to the troubles of Poland; but our turn is coming. We will tear off her mask. We will show the world how a people is really reduced to slavery. You shall soon have an opportunity of judging whether lord Ponsonby spoke truth, when he repeated to every body who would listen to him, 'Russia is no longer of any account; henceforward Poland will prevent her from interfering in the affairs of Europe: her government is quite Asiatic,' &c. How does this Albion, loaded with debt, and now imbued with the most perfidious principles, dare to rouse the bear (for so they call us), who devoured Napoleon, with the first army that ever invaded her territories, and marched to Paris to revenge their rashness. No, our turn must come; and we shall soon have no need to make any treaty with this people but at Calcutta. Her false policy has done its best. Let her go and make alliances with the African negroes, whom she wishes so well, and for whom she has made Europe her dupe. The barbarians and slaves, as her papers call us, will teach her a lesson. Meanwhile, let her go on. It is all we want."—*Moscow Gazette*, Dec. 27th, 1832. The zeal of this writer has carried him a little beyond the limits of historical truth, when he asserts that Napoleon's army was the first that ever invaded the Russian territories. He seems to have entirely forgotten the invasion by Charles XII., the frequent triumphs of the Poles, who held possession of Moscow itself more than once, and the conquest of the whole empire by the Tartars, who held their conquest for 200 years. We can allow him to indulge his passion as much as he pleases, but we cannot suffer him to falsify history. Here then, we have a candid threat of the ultimate purpose of Russia in the east, a declaration that she expects speedily to make a treaty with the English at Calcutta, and this declaration bears date only

As we do not propose, in this place, to follow out the whole consequence of the Russian occupation of Constantinople, we will confine ourselves to its immediate effects in promoting the designs of that power upon India. Of the practicability of that occupation, past events have already furnished convincing proofs ; and if the Russian standard has not been raised on the dome of St. Sophia, it has been, not because Russia, who compelled the sultan to make injurious terms with her at Adrianople, could not have achieved that object, but because she was too prudent to attempt it by means that would have alarmed the states of Europe before she was prepared to meet the results that must have inevitably followed. The celebrated Potemkin long ago declared that Constantinople could be approached successfully only by a march through Asia, and the Russian cabinet has invariably acted upon that suggestion ever since, not omitting, at the same time, to mature her means for a different mode of approach, should circumstances render such a course advisable. Her struggles in the Caucasus, however, have not been carried on without enormous losses, and, notwithstanding the subjugation of some of the mountain potentates, there are several tribes which still preserve their independence ; such as the Occidental Circassians, the Abasses of the Great Abassi, the Nagaï on the left of the Kuban, and others. But she would not have persisted in such a fearful sacrifice of life and treasure, if she did not calculate upon ultimately acquiring an advantage that would amply repay her for so great an outlay. It has been urged, by some writers, that the conquest of Constantinople is rendered impracticable by the vast pecuniary cost to which it would expose Russia.

so recently as 1832, and in the interval, she has been strengthening her navy, and maturing all her preparations for a war. That the reduction of England's supremacy is the great object which occupies her policy, may be gathered from her servile press throughout Germany, as well as at home, and particularly from the Frankfort Journal, which is known to be in her pay, and which is distinctly instructed to inculcate the necessity of a new continental system, so as to take from England all political and commercial influence in Europe.

But this is surely an error. Such an acquisition, as has been well observed *, would be cheaply bought at the expence of twenty campaigns ; nor would the expenditure, probably, exceed the sum which is annually laid out in the attempt to subjugate the Caucassian families. Besides, the moment she enters Constantinople, she takes possession of the treasures of the sultan ; and all experience bears testimony to the facility with which a conquering power can obtain money, if it be required, from every 'change in Europe upon any sudden contingency. Assuming, therefore, as a position which cannot be very easily refuted, that the occupation of Constantinople is within the reach of the power of Russia, as it unquestionably enters into her schemes of aggrandizement, it may be asserted, that the extraordinary increase of maritime force which she would at once acquire, would give to her subsequent movements greater freedom and vigour than ever she has been able to attain hitherto. The preponderance she would thus secure is infinitely greater than may be generally anticipated. Taking into account the state of her own navy, the activity that pervades the arsenals of the Black Sea, and the ships which she would find ready for use at Constantinople, she would have at once at her disposal no less than one hundred men-of-war, and a numerous flotilla of several armed craft. Having unlimited supplies of all necessary materials within herself, she could thus easily secure and organize her acquisition. She has already 30,000 men employed on board her vessels and in the arsenals, which number she could rapidly increase, not only by levies in her own territories, but by the thousands of Greek sailors who would hasten to her aid from Hydra, Spezia, and Psara, and who would be actuated by a spirit of enthusiasm to hail the cross of the Greek church elevated above the crescent.† Constantinople once in the possession of Russia, the passage to India ceases to be a question of difficulty. The voyage from London to the

* British and Foreign Review.

† Ibid.

ports of the Indian peninsula is estimated at about sixteen or eighteen thousand miles; from Constantinople to Bombay or Surat, it is, at the utmost, three thousand, including a land-carriage of four hundred miles — from Trebisond to Moussul — through a country abounding with cheap means of transport, and recommended by the further advantage of having Erzeroum, an important intermediate mart, lying directly in the route. There is no place, east of Constantinople, better calculated for assembling a large force than the plain of Erzeroum *; horses, cattle, forage, and corn, abound in the neighbouring provinces; and the roads are excellent, and well calculated for the transportation of artillery. In an attempt upon India this frontier presents equal advantages, although it is not likely to be made the base of operations by the Russians, who would probably select the eastern shore of the Caspian and the Aral as being more eligible for the purpose. The two great lines of trade from the east to the Black Sea, which the Russians would endeavour to establish, would pass through the Persian Gulf to Trebisond, and from the borders of Tartarian China, Bokhara, the Punjab, &c. to the embouchure of the Don. From Trebisond to the Don, these lines would converge to Constantinople as an entrepot, and thence be transmitted to the Mediterranean, the Danube, and other rivers, probably by steam.† A canal has long been projected from the Danube to the Rhine, and the expence was calculated, by Napoleon, at about seven hundred thousand pounds. Thus an immense traffic would be rapidly created, which would invest Russia with such a commercial supremacy that she might wield at pleasure her power of intrigue in the east. The formation of an internal intercourse between Constantinople and Asia, would gradually lead to the establishment of mercantile agents at these points, dangerous to British ascendancy in India, Cabul, Lahore, Sind, the Mahrattas, &c.; the functions of the merchant would speedily be merged

* Colonel Macdonel Kinneir, British envoy at the court of Persia.

† Designs of Russia, by colonel De Lacy Evans.

in the sinister projects of the political emissary ; and the seeds of the contemplated invasion would be laid in a soil already prepared by discontent and division to receive and nurture them. With the usual duplicity, promises of the restoration of ancient rights and musnuds would be held out by Russia ; the disbanded soldiery, the prostrate zemindars, the humiliated Pindaries, the dethroned rajahs, and all the elements of revolution which exist, and which could not fail to have been precipitated, in such a territory as India, would be drawn into action ; and millions of Mahometans, flattered, perhaps, with the hope of the recovery of the Mogul Empire, would be attracted to the Russian standard, until, at last, the ferment in the public mind of those countries, would be such as to render unavoidable an increase of the Indian army by, at least, fifty thousand men, by which an immense increase of expenditure would be incurred, while the receipts would be diminishing from the same causes in an equal proportion.* By such means as these, without coming to an open war, Russia might successfully harass the Indian border, neutralize the advantages which England at present derives from her oriental possessions, waste her revenues in a costly war establishment, and, professing the most cordial amity all the time, finally attain the great objects which she has long and restlessly coveted.

The necessity which the development of the mere disturbing influences of Russia in the east would force upon England, of sending to so remote a scene of action a vast army, at a cost of probably 10,000,000*l.*, demanding for their transport 200,000 tons of shipping, would be in itself a national calamity. The possession of Constantinople by the Russians would obliterate from the map these neutral countries that now lie between India and Russia, and convert them into a source of imposing and aggressive force : and while a reinforcement of British troops would be making the tedious voyage by the Cape of Good Hope, a new army might

* Designs of Russia, by colonel De Lacy Evans.

be organised by the dominant power in Persia. Nor would this be all. The whole disposable force of England would be required for India: the uncertainty produced by distance alone would distract her attention from any European contest in which she might become engaged, thus utterly paralysing her foreign policy; and the utmost financial sacrifices she could make would be absorbed, perhaps in vain, by her armaments for the preservation of Hindostan.*

Second:—The distance of the Russian frontier from India presents the chief difficulty against the direct invasion of that country: and the only way she could overcome that difficulty would be to advance her frontiers, either by conquest, or by that insidious mode of subjugation, ruling through the reigning princes, which is more consonant with her habitual policy, more easily effected, and which, on all accounts, is the course she would most probably adopt. There are but two directions in which she could advance her frontier, or, which in this case would be the same thing, extend her influence. The countries designated under the general appellation of Central Asia, and lying between Russia and India, are chiefly divided into four kingdoms, — Persia, Khiva or Kharizm, Bokhara, and Cabul. Besides these, there are vast regions, subdivided into numerous principalities, and inhabited by wild communities, in which no form of government exists, and which do not acknowledge any authority whatever. These kingdoms present two lines of approach from the Russian frontier to India — the one by the subjugation of Persia, the other by the conquest of Kharizm and Bokhara. Upon the latter course it is unnecessary to dwell, as, notwithstanding some opinions to the contrary†, it has been shown to be utterly impracticable. The religious fanaticism of the population of Bokhara would defeat any attempt to subject them to European laws, or to draw

* England, France, Russia, and Turkey.

† Amongst these, it is curious to find the *Edinburgh Review*.

them under the effectual control of an European government. A great moral revolution should be brought about in the character and habits of the Oozbeks and Toorkomans, before the influence of a foreign power could be established amongst them. Notwithstanding the difficulty, however, of making an impression upon these savage races, Russia has diligently laboured to be beforehand with the other European powers in the attempt. "The Russians," says captain Burnes, "have impressed the whole of the Oozbeks with high notions of their power, to the detriment of all other European nations." This would be the work of time, and a mission of peace, and could not be accomplished by the sword. It would cost Russia such enormous sacrifices, and would engross such a period of years (probably a century), before she could arrive at India by that route, that we may regard it as a project in which she will never engage, the more especially as she has within her reach a country which offers fewer obstacles to her progress, which she has already penetrated, over which she exercises a certain degree of unavowed influence *, and which, by the very nature of its government, as well as its position, is more exposed to her power. We will therefore turn to the examination of the only remaining mode by which this gigantic design could be consummated — the subjugation of Persia.

The circumstances in which Persia is placed render her not only an attractive, but an easy, prey to Russia.

* The influence which Russia exercises over Persia, and which it is of the utmost importance to note in the consideration of this question, may be gathered by a reference to recent events. Russia guaranteed the succession of the crown to Abbas Meerza, by the treaty of Goolistan. That prince died in 1834, leaving a son, Mohammed, who succeeded to the crown a few months afterwards, upon the death of the reigning monarch. Russia at once acknowledged Mohammed as the legitimate sovereign, but left to England the labour and expense of supporting his claims by soldiers and a subsidy. He was, in fact, seated upon his throne by British arms, which subdued the southern provinces, that had revolted against him. A brilliant embassy was sent from England to his court, to congratulate him on his accession; yet, after more than a year's negotiations, and in despite of all these services rendered to the shah, such was the influence of Russia in his councils, that all the British officers were compelled to resign their commissions in his army; and he marched a large body of Persian troops to Herat, in open defiance of the British envoy.

The advantages to be gained from her conquest are as striking as the facilities by which the conquest could be effected. She is the richest and the most important kingdom of Central Asia. Her population is at once the largest and the most highly educated; her resources are the most prolific; her establishments the most matured; the infusion of the European military system into the country has prepared the Persian soldier to receive that discipline for which his hardy and abstemious habits, his activity, intelligence, and capacity of endurance, favourably adapt him; and, as an eastern nation, Persia holds the most exalted rank in the estimation of all the Asiatic tribes. The attainment of a paramount sway in Persia, either by overrunning the country, or by establishing an authority over the people through the reigning monarch, would be inevitably followed by the downfall of all the other governments of Asia. Fifty thousand efficient soldiers, which could be readily organised by Russia, would rapidly subdue Bokhara, Kharizm, Herat, Kandahar, and the other provinces to the Indus, until such a commanding and central position might be secured, as would effectually enable the invader to absorb the independence of Bagdad, Kourdistan, and the other shattered portions of Asiatic Turkey. The facilities to this undertaking are to be found in the disorganised and enfeebled state of the country. The whole population is between 7,000,000 and 8,000,000, of which not more than about 5,000,000 are permanently located. One third of the entire is composed of the Bactiaries, or mountaineers, and Fairlie Ariby, who may be regarded as predatory races, contributing nothing to the protection of the state, but, on the contrary, living by plunder and lawless practices. The kingdom is subdivided into separate provinces, each of which has its own separate interests and objects to promote, owing to the universal corruption that prevails throughout the whole of the official authorities. The governor of each state, who is generally one of the

shah's sons or relatives, pays a fixed annual tribute to the sovereign, which releases him from any further obligations ; and, satisfying his allegiance by the regular discharge of this responsibility, he exercises his functions apparently for no other purpose than that of oppressing the people by every species of exaction which his ingenuity can devise, and his unlimited powers enable him to enforce. This perversion of justice for the basest ends is considerably assisted in detail by the law, which visits almost every kind of delinquency with a pecuniary mulct ; so that the governor can use his own caprice, both in the construction of offences, and in the fines with which they are visited. This practice is common to every part of Persia. In addition to these sources of national disaffection, are the feuds in reference to the succession which prevail in every Oriental country. Upon the death of the monarch, a multitude of claims are immediately set up to the throne ; and it usually happens, as in the case of the present shah, that the rightful heir, if, indeed, he be so fortunate as to succeed, is indebted to foreign aid for the means of obtaining possession of his inheritance. The present dynasty, also, is very unpopular, particularly amongst the Synds, a numerous body of families, who would be glad of an opportunity for attempting to restore the Sophi branch of the royal family. All these circumstances combine to facilitate the progress of such a powerful neighbour as Russia. Any of the competitors for the crown whom she might choose to protect would be certain of success ; and, as all these rival princes are willing enough to sacrifice the independence of the kingdom for the shadow of royal authority, the emperor would thus more effectually command the resources of the country, by the instrument which his influence might place upon the throne, than even by an open conquest. The intrigues of Russia, of late years, with this design palpably in view, sufficiently proves the eagerness with which she is taking advantage of the existing state of things : but her intrigues are of too minute and special a kind to find a place in

these pages, which are more usefully dedicated to the broader features of historical inquiry.*

Persia at present employs about 40,000 or 50,000 men, in various parts of the country, under the designation of regular infantry; but, presuming that Russia establishes her internal influence more firmly in that kingdom, the better organisation of the provinces would enable her to maintain it with a much smaller force; while the revenues would be considerably increased by the necessary improvements in the local governments. If, in addition to these troops, a body of 15,000 effective men were brought into the field (the annual expense of which has been calculated at only 200,000*l.*) †, the conquest of Bokhara might be accomplished without difficulty. Bokhara is an oasis in the desert, and would be at once overawed after Persia had become subservient. Khiva, lying between Russia on the one side, and Persia and Bokhara on the other, would next capitulate, and be thus drawn into the great league. With Persia and the adjacent countries at her disposal, the principal aim of Russia would be, to take possession of Herat, which is, even now, almost an integral part of Persia, and which is, of all points on the frontiers of the Afghan country, the most favourable to prepare for the invasion of India. Herat is the seat of a petty government, in the hands of a branch of the royal family of Cabul, and which purchases a sort of vague claim to independence by the payment of an annual sum to the shah of Persia, under the name of a present, but which is in reality a tribute. The citadel is garrisoned by Persian troops, under the

* The perpetual interference of Russia in the affairs of the shah is conducted with so much tact, that it is difficult to obtain proofs of it, although its results are sufficiently evident. We know, however, that Russia frequently urged the prince royal to undertake the subjugation of Herat, Khorassan, and Khiva; offering to assist him in the attempt, and hinting that he might indemnify himself eastward for the loss of Georgia. These suggestions were made clearly with a view to render herself necessary as an ally in the first instance, before she throws off the mask, and takes the destinies of the kingdom really into her hands. Dolgorouky, a Russian agent, who was at Ispahan in 1831, was said to have been chiefly occupied in ascertaining the different routes to the Indus.

† See colonel Chesney's Memoir, &c.

command of a member of the shah's family. The commanding position of the city, which is placed in a fertile and well-watered valley, and is one of the greatest emporiums of the commerce of Asia, affords the most signal advantages for an enterprise against India. It is almost equi-distant from Kerman, Yezd, Tubbus, Toorsheez, Meshed, Bokhara, Bulkh, and Kandahar. The climate is fine; it is always amply provided with stores; and not only draws supplies from all the neighbouring countries, but possesses the means within itself of furnishing every article which those countries yield. It is capable of affording supplies, according to a high military authority*, for 150,000 men. It has been emphatically called "the key to India."† From this point, the route to the Indus lies comparatively open, presenting no difficulties in the way of provisions for an army, or the means of transporting its material.‡

The possession of Herat, under the circumstances we have supposed, would be of the utmost importance to the advancement and consolidation of the power of Russia in that direction. It would give her time and means for maturing her arrangements, without incurring much expense or risk in bringing them to issue. Holding Herat as a depot, within an easy distance of the scene of action, she could concentrate her troops upon that point, without exposing them to any danger, or impairing their efficiency on the march. They would pass through a friendly, instead of a hostile, country. Russia might thus gradually strengthen herself for the proposed enterprise: her name, her power, and her policy would rapidly become known in India, and the elements of discord would at last take such shapes of

* Colonel Borowski.

† See Blackwood's Magazine for 1827, *passim*.

‡ Colonel Chesney, in the memoir to which we have already referred, conjectures that the plan which a Russian force, organised on the plains of Herat, would most probably adopt, would be by manœuvres in front of the Anglo-Indian army, to endeavour to draw it southward, until its flank could be turned by a second corps, ascending the Oxus, as high as Balkh, in order to debouch on Peshawar, using a feeder of the Indus, from about Orciagoi, to facilitate the operation, and finally opening a route for the main body as far as the Indus.

menace, that she might calculate with accuracy upon the favourable moment for carrying her design into execution. At all times, she would have at her command the services of a considerable body of troops, without incurring the expense of maintaining them. If she never moved beyond this point, but hung, as it were, like a storm-cloud on the borders, she would so effectually unsettle the public mind of India, that the relative position of Great Britain would be completely changed.

Between Herat and India, taking the Indus as the natural frontier of the latter, the only remaining barrier is the kingdom of Cabul. The country that intervenes between the boundaries of British India and the Indus, from the mountains to the sea, cannot be considered as presenting a difficulty either to the invader or the invaded in the event of a war; for, upon the first indication of danger from the north-west, or of hostilities by land, the British troops would at once find it necessary to occupy the whole of those territories, and to take up their position on the banks of the Indus. Indeed, the Indus is the real frontier of India, although the British dominions do not any where touch it, extending merely to a part of the Sutlege, one of its tributary streams. The Russian force, therefore, would have only the kingdom of Cabul to traverse before they would be in front of the Anglo-Indian army. The population of this once powerful empire of the Afghans, shattered as it is by internal discords, amounts to about 5,000,000 of people, broken up into various principalities, and divided by an endless succession of feuds, but united by the bonds of a common language, nation, and religion, and capable of furnishing some of the most warlike, but undisciplined, soldiers in Asia. The governor of Herat is the representative of the royal family of Cabul; and the position he holds on that account, as well as his connection with the neighbouring kingdom, render him an object of enmity to all the Afghan chiefs, who consider him dangerous, because he belongs to the legitimate

stock. The three principal chiefs are those of Cabul, Kandahar, and Peshawar. The two former are governed by the brothers of Futteh Khan, who are constantly involved in quarrels amongst themselves. The lamentable excesses to which these dissensions have led are universally felt in the weakness of the petty governments, the breaking up of the population into hostile parties, the neglect of agriculture, the dilapidation of the villages, the insecurity of property, and the general desolation of the country. The inhabitants, however, are remarkably brave, and were at one period considered such excellent horsemen, that Nadir Shah esteemed them as forming the best cavalry troops in his army. A people so circumstanced could not make any combined effort against an enemy: their opposition would, at best, be but desultory and irregular. The Russians at Herat, therefore, would have to pass through a kingdom which might not only be easily subjugated by force of arms, but which might be still more easily subdued by artifice; and the distractions of the inhabitants afford such tempting materials for the exercise of diplomatic skill, that it is not likely an appeal to arms would ever become necessary. What reception the Russians would meet on the banks of the Indus, whether they would be able to establish themselves on the opposite side, and what effect such movements would have upon the domestic affairs of India, are questions which are too speculative to admit of discussion: but it is certain that, if Russia should ever attain the position we have described (which appears to be extremely probable, since she is hourly labouring to secure it, and England takes no measures to prevent her), the power of Great Britain in India will be shaken to its foundations.

In the view which we have taken of the advances of Russia in Persia, we have assumed the gradual submission of the latter power to the spreading supremacy of the former, as being the most likely result of the crafty policy of the cabinet of St. Petersburg. Of such a result it would be unreasonable to entertain any doubt, so long

as the interests of England continue to be so carelessly represented in Persia, and the frontier of India remains so exposed to the approach of an enemy. But, even if the independence of Persia were firmly established, Russia might still venture, against fearful, but not invincible, odds, to undertake the passage through Central Asia. The military topography of those countries admits of five different routes for an army.* They may be thus succinctly enumerated:—1. From Orenburg, through the steppes of Khirgis to Bokhara, and thence by Balkh to Cabul. This route is scarcely available: it is exposed, during more than one half of the distance, to the hordes of Toorkomans, who would exceedingly harass and interrupt the advance of an army; besides that it would be necessary to carry water for the use of troops, which would occupy one third of the baggage-camels. Unless the Russians were to secure their ground by successive conquests as they pushed forward, the line would be altogether impracticable. 2. From the Caspian at Manghishlak to Khiva and the Oxus. The whole distance is a desert, having but one village; and, being destitute of water, except some in wells at great intervals, and which is scarcely fit for use, drinking-water should be carried the entire way. Arrived at the Oxus, it would be necessary to ascend the stream to Kilif, near Balkh; from whence to Cabul is only 250 miles, a feeder from which conducts to the main stream of the Indus. This would be a very protracted march, and would also be exposed to flying attacks from the Persians. In this instance, as in the former, it would be necessary to organise progressive conquests, so as to form one base after another in approaching the point of final operations. 3. A *coup de main* from Astrabad through Khorassan to Herat, from whence there are three practicable roads to Kandahar, and two from thence to the Indus. The entire distance is about 2000 miles. 4. Through the heart of Persia to Shiraz, and thence to a base through the Mukran to Hyderabad, on which

* See colonel Chesney's Memoir, &c.

there would be supplies, and no opposition of any consequence short of the Indus. These two last-mentioned routes could not be accomplished unless Persia were subjugated; in which case, the difficulties that otherwise appear to be insuperable would vanish at once. 5. The rapid descent of the Euphrates to the sea on rafts from below Erzeroum. This may be accomplished, at the flooded season, in eight or ten weeks, carrying guns, stores, and troops along a rapid current fourteen feet in depth. Mesopotamia and Chaldea, fertile in timber, and every necessary supply for ulterior operations, invite a *coup de main* in this direction, either by sea or a coast march, sheltered by a flotilla of flat boats moving along the shore.

With respect to the Euphrates, it is important to observe, that recent investigations have proved the practicability of a passage along its banks for the march of an army to the Persian Gulf. This fact assumes a still more warning aspect from the proximity of the Russian frontier, which is now advanced to within 120 miles of the river. But it has been asserted that, even if the Russians penetrated to the Persian Gulf, they could not procure a sufficient number of vessels there to convey any considerable body of troops to India. This assertion would not be worth much if it were true, as Russia could readily provide against such a difficulty: it is founded, however, upon total misconception or ignorance of the state of the territories in that neighbourhood. The Imaum of Muscat *, with whom Russia has exhibited a strong desire to form amicable relations, could collect enough of transports for 20,000 men. His navy consists of four heavy frigates, two of which carry fifty guns; three corvettes, carrying from eighteen to twenty-two guns; and several smaller vessels of war. In addition to this naval force, there are numerous merchant ships belonging to Muscat, besides the Arab traders, some of which are upwards of 200 tons burden. The ships of the Imaum

* We adopt the European mode of spelling this name, which is, more properly, Maskat.

are continually cruising about in the Persian Gulf ; while the English have seldom on those waters more than one or two small vessels of twelve or eighteen guns. It ought to be remembered that Muscat commands the mouth of the gulf : its harbour is capable of affording shelter to a large number of vessels ; and such is the strength of its position, that, in a short time, a skilful engineer could render the port impregnable. If the Imaum were to form a junction with Russia, the operations of that power in reference to the invasion of India would be so facilitated, that, before the naval force of India could be concentrated, or almost before intelligence of such an event could reach head-quarters (a month being, at certain seasons, or ten days by steam, the least period within which a communication could be held between India and Muscat), the transport of an army to the shores of Hindostan could be effected. Such a contingency, perhaps we shall be told, is extremely unlikely. We confess we consider it to be extremely probable, if the policy of the British government in India towards the government of Oman be not speedily improved. It is true that the British authorities have entered into a treaty, defensive and offensive, with the Imaum ; and that that prince, in testimony of the value he placed upon the British alliance, sent a present of a magnificent seventy-four to his majesty William IV. ; but, upon a late occasion, when the Imaum required assistance, the British authorities decided that the terms which bound them to render him succour were mere eastern hyperbole, and refused the aid he sought.* This is not the way to keep Russia off these dangerous coasts.

Such are the routes that might be taken by Russia under the most disadvantageous circumstances ; but none of which she will ever probably attempt until Persia is completely in her interests. The invasion of India, therefore, is to be apprehended only through

* See lieutenant Wellsted's Travels in Arabia, a work of great interest, and developing more information concerning the neglected province of Oman than is to be found in any other publication. .

Central Asia, subjugated by the policy of the Russian cabinet.

This fact explains the course which the government of England ought to adopt in reference to the East. The independence of Persia, her rescue from the insidious counsels of Russia, and her permanent preservation as a barrier between the Indus and the Russian frontier, are elementary necessities in this great question. The Afghan country, hitherto utterly abandoned to its debasing dissensions, notwithstanding that, at the custom-house at Cabul, duties upon produce almost exclusively British are annually paid to the amount of 800,000*l.*, ought to be drawn into a bond of alliance with the British authorities. The banks of the Indus ought to be gained (which, no doubt, they will be), and occupied by British troops. With this important frontier secured, and an interval friendly to the interests of Great Britain beyond, the invasion of India by Russia would be one of the chimeras which are rarely undertaken except by mighty conquerors, whose genius seems destined to surmount the worst impediments. But there is some danger that this conviction will come too late. The policy observed by the government of India has been altogether inadequate to the vastness and importance of the empire over which they presided. While they conquered and absorbed the territory within, they seem to have made but slight account of the value of extending their influence without. The influence of national character, and of the diffusion of the knowledge of political power, appears to have entirely escaped their consideration. The weight of a country is derived, not merely from the power which it actually possesses, but from the power which it is known to possess. The government of India have forgotten that the growth of the eastern empire of England was so rapid, that the minds of men could hardly keep pace with it, and that the Asiatic nations, therefore, could not, without the receipt of constant information, fully appreciate the rank, the extent, and the resources of a sovereignty which is greater than that of

Akbar, and more splendid than that of Aurungzebe. Yet, while other states were zealously improving their connection with Central Asia, by a variety of means, the government of British India have had no accredited minister at any independent court ; they have had no mode of communication or correspondence, of transmitting or receiving intelligence ; and have literally held no intercourse with any kingdom or principality west of the Indus. It is not, therefore, surprising that the influence of the British name should be comparatively trivial in Asia ; that the extent of the British power in India should be but imperfectly known ; and that, partly arising from this ignorance, and partly from the superior activity of the agents of Russia, Central Asia vacillates between the two powers. A slight motion would turn the balance in favour of Russia : it would now require a systematic and continuous movement to give the advantage to England. One fact is abundantly clear, — that Central Asia cannot remain neutral : she must be at one side or the other ; and the question that remains to be decided is this — as it has been concisely expressed by an able writer*, — whether England is to encounter Russia, with all Asia at her back ; or to oppose Russia, with all Asia, at her side.

* British and Foreign Review.

CHAP. V.

PROGRESS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. — EARLY MODERATION OF PAUL. — EFFECT OF THE REVOLUTION ON THE STATES OF EUROPE. — POLICY OF MR. PITT. — INTERPOSITION OF ENGLAND. — CONVENTIONS OF MANTUA AND PILNITZ NEUTRALISED BY THE SUBMISSION OF LOUIS TO THE ASSEMBLY. — VIOLENT AND IMPRACTICABLE PROJECTS FOR HIS LIBERATION BY RUSSIA, SWEDEN, AND SARDINIA. — PROXIMATE CAUSES OF THE WAR. — ALLIANCE BETWEEN RUSSIA, AUSTRIA, AND GREAT BRITAIN. — DISMISSAL OF SUWARROW. — PAUL GRADUALLY DRAWN INTO THE WAR. — MALTA CAPITULATES TO NAPOLEON. — PAUL EMBARKS WITH ARDOUR IN THE CONFEDERATION, AND ENTERS INTO AN OFFENSIVE TREATY WITH AUSTRIA AND ENGLAND. — HE CONTEMPLATES A GRAND COALITION OF ALL THE EUROPEAN SOVEREIGNS. — TREATY OF RASTADT BROKEN OFF BY THE MARCH OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY. — SUWARROW RECALLED FROM BANISHMENT, AND APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF THE ALLIED FORCES. — HIS CHARACTER AND EC-CENTRICITIES. — SKETCH OF THE RUSSIAN TROOPS — INFANTRY — CAVALRY — COSSACKS. — JEALOUSY AND DISTRUST OF THE NEW ALLIES IN THE AUSTRIAN CAMP.

THE rapid advance of democratic principles in France, and the brilliant victories of the republican armies, so completely engrossed the attention of Europe at the time of Paul's accession to the throne, that it soon became impossible for Russia to remain passive. Paul's hatred of France was as strong as that of Catherine. It was the only subject upon which they discovered a point of agreement. But Paul's animosity against that nation, although it could not have been more fierce, was not quite so reasonable. Catherine abhorred France on account of the new treasons against tyranny to which it had given birth; and carried her resistance to the spread of those dangerous doctrines as far as her power enabled her. She prohibited the admission of French books into Russia, and she compelled all Frenchmen

who resided within her dominions to abjure the constitution to which the unfortunate Louis was forced to subscribe. Paul's aversion to France was not merely of a political nature ; he disliked the people, their customs, their gaiety, and their whole social system. It was not surprising that a man so austere and mechanical in his manners, so solemnly devoted to trifles, so sensitive upon the minutest points of form, and so incapable of comprehending the elements of national character, which he seems to have regarded as a matter regulated by a system of discipline, should have been shocked by the levities of Versailles, and the libertinism of Paris. The journey he made to France in his youth left an impression upon his mind which was confirmed by subsequent events. He was in the habit of attributing the worst vices to the French : he believed them to be the most immoral people in the world ; and, with his usual inconsistency and extravagance, he hated them less for the faults he found in them, than for the faults which his implacable prejudices assigned to them. Catherine liked the French, until the revolution inspired her with vengeance against a country which had shown an example so fraught with perils to the old despotisms : Paul hated the French long before the revolution had furnished him with a feasible excuse for hostilities. This was precisely the difference between them,—that Catherine acted in a spirit of watchful policy, and Paul took the current of his passions, which happened, in this instance, to run in the same channels.

The first acts of Paul's reign exhibited a wise moderation, which, exhausted as the empire was by the protracted war with Turkey, the frantic expedition against Persia, and the settlement of Poland, was a source of universal congratulation to the Russians. But he had no sooner satisfied the spleen and malice he felt towards the memory of his mother, than the inconstancy and perversity of his nature committed him to the most absurd proceedings. It was reported of him that he had made use of the following remarkable expression

before he was called to the throne:—“In whatever light, and in whatever circumstances, I wish to view an emperor of Russia, his noblest part will always be that of a pacificator ;” and, upon the faith of this memorable declaration, the people rested their hopes that Paul would restore to the empire that repose which the extravagance and ruinous enterprises of Catherine had rendered so essential to its welfare. But, whatever might have been his original dispositions, there is no doubt that his subsequent conduct was, for the greater part, that of a man who was utterly deficient in judgment, who recognised no law but that of his own will, and whose passions were so arbitrary, that, had they not been occasionally checked by his fears and his caprices, he might have transcended Ivan the Terrible in cruelty, and rushed to wilder excesses than the profane mysteries of the Hermitage.*

Immediately after his accession, Paul refused to ratify the treaty which Catherine had concluded with England; and he suspended the levy which was then going forward for recruiting the army in Persia, and completing the force that was destined to move against France. His first intentions were evidently pacific; and, although he entertained so deep a dislike to the French nation, he was induced by other motives to forego that opportunity of gratifying it. But events rapidly crowded upon him that rendered the continuance of that course impracticable. If he desired to confer upon Russia the blessings of peace, after the long and costly wars in which the late empress had plunged the country, the progress of affairs amongst his European allies showed too clearly that the time was not yet arrived when it would be safe for Russia to remain neutral. A variety of circumstances conspired to draw the battalions of the north once more into the field.

When the first indications of the revolution in France

* The secret orgies of the Hermitage—instituted by Catherine II.—are to be found in the scandalous chronicles of the time. The details are not fit for repetition.

broke out, the relative position of every power in Europe underwent an immediate change. It was felt that the subjects which then engaged their consideration were of infinitely lesser moment than the domestic convulsion which menaced them with a flood of violent opinions which, should it force its way into their territories, must have overwhelmed them. The united imperial armies of Austria and Russia, 250,000 strong, had shaken the Ottoman empire to its centre, and, extending over a line 400 miles in length, were on the point of crushing out the last signs of life in its enfeebled frame, when England and Prussia interfered, and Frederic-William, marching 100,000 men to the frontiers of Bohemia, forced the imperial invader to pause on his career of conquest, by diverting his eyes from the Danube to the shores of the Elbe. A conference followed; the Prussian army finally retired; and a treaty of peace was ultimately concluded, as we have already seen, with Turkey. Catherine, as a pledge of her sincerity, also entered into a peace with the king of Sweden, who, while Frederic-William hung upon the borders of Bohemia, threatened his gigantic neighbour from the opposite shore of the gulf of Finland, for the purpose of distracting her from the pursuit of her project in Turkey. These movements were accomplished with astonishing celerity. The consternation which the eloquent and fearless denunciations of the French revolutionists had occasioned in the courts of Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and St. James's, had the effect of concentrating their whole attention upon that quarter, and of hastening their measures for releasing themselves from all other engagements whatever. There is no doubt that the English minister, Mr. Pitt, was the genius of the confederation that followed against France; and, strange as it may appear, that a kingdom, insulated by its position from the states of Europe, possessing the greatest maritime ascendancy, and the freest constitution in the world, should become the break-water of a popular struggle against monarchical ascendancy, a brief examination of the principles at issue will show

that the natural part for England to have taken in the contest was that which she did take ; although, in the rash temper and heat of the times, she went beyond the limits within which a more careful investigation of her peculiar functions would have restricted her. The revolution palpably aimed at the destruction of the monarchy. Every state in Europe was interested in the result. The doctrines of popular rights, which were openly inculcated in France, and which found their way into circulation almost every where else—the fact that Louis was a prisoner in the hands of the democratic party in the Tuilleries—alarmed those nations which, by their geographical position, their alliances, or their forms of government, were likely to be affected by the extension of these momentous excitements. England had less to apprehend from the diffusion of the new theories of civil rights than any of the European states ; her people were free, her government was representative, and she possessed in the machinery of her constitution those means of adaptation and reform which rendered a revolution unnecessary to the attainment of any desired changes. But this very condition of freedom and prosperity pointed her out as the best arbitrator between the revolutionists of France and the old governments of Europe—Spain, Austria, Prussia, Sweden, the Netherlands. Her voice was a voice of authority. She did not require to preface her interposition with promises or professions. Her interference was clear of all suspicion. She had less to gain, but more to preserve, than any of those powers. When she took the lead, therefore, in the negotiations that finally drew the continental states into a bond of union against revolutionised France, she merely fulfilled the office which she was inevitably called upon to execute by her prominent position, by the universal respect and confidence with which she was regarded, and, above all, by her independence as a country where true liberty had been developed with happier results than in any nation of ancient or modern times. The war against France was not a war against freedom,

although in its desolating course the combatants on both sides frequently took the colour of principles to which they did not possess any legitimate claim : it was a war against anarchy, which is more obnoxious to freedom than even the despotism of the throne. If Austria or Russia, for example, had undertaken this important object without the participation of England, it is not improbable that the sympathies of the bulk of the people of Europe would have been speedily arrayed on the side of France ; and that a continental war between the discontented of every kingdom, on the one hand, fighting under the French standard, and their leagued sovereigns on the other, would have followed. It wanted nothing but this sort of resistance to the movement in France to give to the revolution all the *éclat* of a glorious ebullition of pure patriotism ; and, even as it happened, it was estimated in that spirit by a great many sensible but enthusiastic persons, not to speak of the millions who believed that it was the grandest effort for liberty that had ever been achieved. The part which England took in the conflict moderated this view of the events that were going forward in France ; and, having once thrown the weight of her character into the question, she decided the doubts that might otherwise have surrounded its solution.

The influence of England in the councils of Europe, not only calmed the alarms which the national assembly had universally diffused, but averted the violence which must have followed them. During the first two years of the revolution, Mr. Pitt succeeded in impressing upon the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin, the prudence of not opposing that movement, by any demonstrations of a military character, but by the operations of a domestic party in France ; and at the same time, they concurred with him in adopting the most watchful means for preventing the introduction of its principles into other states. While England, Austria, and Prussia were thus united in a sort of armed neutrality, Catherine, more vehement by nature, and secure behind her barriers of ice, was restless in her demands for a

confederation to crush the spirit of democracy. Pitt declared that France had a right to choose any form of government she thought proper, and that the states of Europe were not justified in interfering, until they were required to do so by some pressing necessity, affecting their own safety. Such was the original declaration of the English minister, before England was drawn into the memorable war that followed, in which she was destined to act so distinguished a part; and such was the argument with which he afterwards defended the allied powers, for undertaking that crusade against France. He stated that it was not the object of the war to force the people of France to adopt any particular form of government, but merely to secure their neighbours from aggression; and that, although he much feared that no security could be found for this until a monarchy was restored in that country, yet that it was no part of the allied policy to compel its adoption; that the government of the French republic was changed in form only, and not in spirit, and was as formidable as when the war was first provoked by the declamations of the Girondists. It was by the palpable violation of the pledge insinuated, but not actually uttered in these declarations, that Pitt exposed himself to the merciless invectives, which the French have never ceased to cast upon his memory. Had he pursued with firmness and moderation his early policy in reference to France, much of the evils of that disastrous war, which desolated the fields of Europe for upwards of twenty years, might have been avoided, and the revolution, pent up within its first confined sphere, might have died in that prison to which the formidable alliance on the frontiers would have doomed it. But, having embarked in the war, which became at length unavoidable, when the tide, sweeping with irresistible force through the heart of Europe, forced all the governments to take up arms, this declaration on the part of the allied powers was again falsified, by the sequel which they forced upon France. This sequel was evidently not

the result of circumstances but of previous design ; and Pitt's insincerity in asserting that the war was wholly defensive, did not deceive any body. The war might have been justified on grounds very different from those which were taken up by Pitt, which he meant as a mere blind for the objects he really meditated, and which the experience of every day only contributed to expose.

The symptoms of growing disaffection, which about the beginning of 1791 began to break out in different places, induced the emperor of Germany, the king of Sardinia, and the king of Spain, to enter into an agreement at Mantua, by which it was arranged, that an immense force should be severally furnished, to be divided into five armies, to act on the respective frontiers of France, with a view, by this demonstration alone, to terrify the French people to return to their allegiance. This was followed by the convention of Pilnitz, in which the emperor, and the king of Prussia bound themselves to protect the king of France, whose situation they regarded as "a matter of common interest to all the European sovereigns," appealing at the same time, to the other powers for their assistance. Both of these conventions, however, remained without effect. Either the zeal of the monarchs cooled, or apprehensions for the personal safety of Louis, who was then in the hands of the assembly, prevented them from proceeding beyond the expression of their sympathy. The acceptance of the constitution by the king of France, was an additional reason, which weighed with them perhaps more forcibly than any other, for waiting a little longer, before they plunged into active preparations.* When Louis notified to the foreign courts that he had adopted the constitution urged upon him by the assembly, and that he was resolved to adhere to it with fidelity, they evidently regarded the particular necessity which had drawn their declarations from them, to be altogether at an end. Indeed, so satisfied were they that the danger was over—at least so far as the

* Their's Histoire de la Révolution Française.

king was concerned—that they considered the troubles in France to be permanently appeased by the great concessions made to the democratic party ; and the emperor of Germany not only expressed his pleasure at the issue of affairs in a letter to Louis, but despatched a circular to all the sovereigns of Europe, in which he stated that the acceptance of the constitution had wholly removed the reason for a hostile demonstration, and that, consequently, all preparations for that purpose were suspended. But the intelligence was very differently received in the north. Catherine and Gustavus, with that fiery impatience which essentially marked their characters, refused to admit into their presence the ambassador who was authorised to convey the information of the settlement of the constitution, declaring that the act of the king was not the act of his own will, and that, therefore, he could not be regarded as a free agent. Spain, and the little court of Sardinia in the south, entertained the same view of the situation of Louis, although they did not venture to express it so boldly ; and, under the conviction that the king's life was in jeopardy, and that he acted under compulsion in accepting the constitution (all of which was true enough), they entered into a hasty agreement, the Russians and Swedes to send on their part an armament of 36,000 men from the Baltic, to a point on the coast of Normandy, where they were to disembark and march direct on Paris ; while, on the other part, a hostile movement from Spain and Piedmont on the Pyrenees and the Alps, was to complete this combined manœuvre for the liberation of the French monarch. But, without the support of the other European powers, such a project as this was hopeless. Events, however, rapidly ensued which prevented them even from attempting to carry it into effect.

The proximate causes of the war cannot be very satisfactorily traced. Both sides appear to have been highly excited, and ready to seize upon the first pretext that offered for entering the field. The French govern-

ment loudly complained of the gathering of emigrants at Coblentz, and other places on the frontiers; of the refusal or evasion of their demands for the dispersion of these bands by the elector of Trèves and the lesser powers; and of the rapid advance of Austrian troops towards the Brisgau and the Rhine, of which no explanation whatever was afforded. On the other side it was urged, that Avignon and Venaisin had been annexed to France without any legal right; that the Alsatian nobility had been stripped of their privileges in violation of the treaty of Westphalia; that French affiliated societies were endeavouring to disseminate seditious doctrines through the neighbouring states; and that the heads of the revolutionary party were constantly urging, through the public journals, and all other accessible channels, the necessity and virtue of revolt against thrones. The emperor, upon these grounds, proposed the re-establishment of the monarchy on the footing on which it formerly stood, accompanied by certain demands of restitution to the church in Alsace, to the German princes, and to the pope. The result of these demands, which were all rejected, was a declaration of war on the part of Louis, who was coerced into that measure by his ministers, in whose hands he was nothing more than a puppet.

Such was the immediate origin of the war, which 1792. shortly afterwards led to the captivity and execution of the king and queen, and to other memorable atrocities that are hardly credible — so superfluous and insatiable was the sanguinary spirit by which they were dictated. Up to this period Great Britain had strictly observed the neutrality to which she had pledged herself, had reduced her army and her navy in pursuance of a recommendation from the throne, and had even authorized her ambassador, upon leaving the French capital, to renew her assurances of neutrality. The movements of the French revolutionary party, however, rapidly extending to the shores of England, where societies were formed to diffuse their doctrines, appeared to render this neu-

trality no longer desirable ; and, after an angry correspondence, and many indications of hostility, Great Britain made preparations for the approaching rupture, and the French convention unanimously declared war against England.

1795. Deeply interested as Russia was in this important contest, which embraced in its consequences the destinies of the whole of Europe, Catherine contented herself nevertheless with magnificent promises and empty encouragement ; and it was not until the 18th of February, 1795, that she entered into any articles, binding Russia to act with the confederated monarchs. An alliance, offensive and defensive, was then formed between Russia, Great Britain, and Austria ; but it was not productive at first of any important results. The only immediate act to which it led was a fleet of twelve ships of the line and six* frigates, which Catherine sent under the command of admiral Hanikof to reinforce admiral Duncan, who was cruising in the North Seas for the purpose of blockading the squadron recently acquired by France from the Dutch republic. But not falling in with any of the enemy's ships, the fleet returned to Cronstadt.

The circumstances in which this alliance placed Catherine, carried her more rapidly into an active participation in the war than she had calculated upon. She aimed at being the arbitress of the affairs of Europe — a title which she almost ventured to claim amongst her extravagant designations — and she hung back as long as she could from affording any actual assistance, reserving her strength for a favourable opportunity, and satisfying the demands of her position by threats, promises, and intrigues. Prussia, however, refused to accede to this triple alliance, and Spain had already submitted to France, and ratified a peace with that power. Troops were assembling in every direction, England had expended millions upon the war, succours were wanted,

* Authorities differ as to the number of frigates ; Jomini says eight. We adopt the number we find in the majority of writers, and whether it be right or wrong, is not a matter of much moment.

and Catherine, in the height of her fury, is reported, at last, to have exclaimed, when these perplexities pressed upon her, "That it was necessary to employ cannon balls for forcing the Prussian armies to return to the Rhine, or to march over them in order to go to Paris." The defection of Prussia had deprived the allies of a considerable force, upon which they had calculated, and which Catherine hastened to supply by fifty thousand Russians, drawn from the hordes of Cossacks, Kalmucks, Baschkers, and which, under the command of the ferocious Suwarrow, were to rush, like a devouring flame, upon the capital of France. The designs of Catherine were still more ambitious and comprehensive; for, contemplating a grand confederation for the defence of legitimacy in Europe against the French republic, she had issued orders for the levy of 150,000 men, when death intercepted the accomplishment of a design, which, says a modern historian *, might have accelerated, by nearly twenty years, the catastrophe that closed the war.

The army, which was intended by Catherine for this great service, was already assembled in Galicia, with Suwarrow at its head, incessantly demanding orders to march into France. Suwarrow, who had distinguished himself by acts of the most extraordinary bravery in the campaign with Turkey, and who, by sharing in the fatigues of the soldiers, and setting an example to them of that sort of religious fanaticism which was so popular amongst them, possessed an unbounded influence over the army, believed that the terror of his name would turn the tide of fortune, and that it was only necessary to push forwards to Paris to decide the war. But the accession of Paul at once dissolved this vision of glory. Suwarrow was an enthusiastic admirer of the empress, whose gigantic projects were exactly adapted to the wild and impetuous character of his genius. He was in the full sense of the expression a Russian—rude, bold, relentless, and of an indomitable temper. Such a man

* Alison's History of Europe, from the Commencement of the French Revolution, to the Restoration of the Bourbons.

was not likely to submit to the frivolous regulations which the new sovereign introduced into the army. Accustomed to command troops that were usually employed in the most disorderly warfare on the extreme borders of the empire, or in overrunning an enemy's country, the new discipline, by which the attention of the soldier was withdrawn from the practical use of arms to a sort of masquerade of minutè forms, appeared to Suwarrow to be utterly contemptible. Nor did the veteran hesitate to exhibit his disinclination to enforce those rules amongst his troops. Paul, who would gladly have dispensed with the services of a general who was so popular with the soldiery, and who had been so particularly favoured by his mother, resolved to take the first opportunity to remove him; but he was afraid to dismiss him without some pretext, and at first, as he had done with the others whom he secretly intended to disgrace, he confirmed him in all his commands. Shortly afterwards he transmitted him the circular orders for placing the army under the new system, but Suwarrow, attached to the old customs, and well acquainted with the character of the Russian troops, instead of acting in conformity with the instructions of the emperor, turned them off with a *bon mot**, which was rapidly spread amongst the troops, and converted into the burden of a song, with a sort of reckless joyousness, somewhat similar to the gaiety of the French soldier. This snatch of dangerous pleasantry furnished Paul with the excuse he desired for getting rid of Suwarrow, whom he immediately dismissed, and appointed general Rosamberg, an obscure officer, who possessed no other merit than that of being an active promoter of the new discipline, to supersede him. Suwarrow took leave of his devoted troops in a manner characteristic of his original and eccentric nature. He determined to communicate to them in person the order to resign his command which he had just received from the emperor, and directing the colours to be drawn up in order of

* See p. 63.

battle, he caused a pyramid of drums and cymbals to be raised in front of the line. Advancing to the centre, Suwarrow, dressed as a grenadier, but richly decorated with all his orders of merit, and the portraits of the empress and Joseph II., then addressed his companions in arms, and bade them a mournful farewell. Having concluded, he calmly removed his helmet, his coat, arms, and all other insignia of effective service, and depositing them on the pyramid in the form of a trophy, exclaimed, "Comrades, a time will probably come when Suwarrow shall re-appear amongst you ; he will then resume these spoils which he leaves to you, and which he always wore in his victories." Having uttered these words, which produced an extraordinary sensation amongst the soldiers, he withdrew unattended, leaving the command in the hands of his lieutenant-general.

Such was the temper of the army, with Rosamberg endeavouring to reduce it to obedience, when the surges of the war with France, rising upon the empire, awoke Paul from the dream of repose, and solemn trifles, in which he was so well disposed to indulge. The victorious progress of the French had already diffused terror wherever the army of the revolution appeared. Italy was subjugated, and Buonaparte had dictated a peace at the gates of Vienna. Prussia had relinquished the contest, and Spain, having entered into a treaty with France, was embroiled in a quarrel with Russia, on a point of court etiquette.* Austria, humiliated by the recent triumphs of the enemy, was devoting all her energies to the concentration of the means of revenge ; and England, who had expended enormous sums in subsidies for the war, was now more than ever desirous to assist Austria in her efforts to prevail upon Paul to enter into

* This quarrel was the most preposterous that, perhaps, ever took place between two nations. Paul, irritated at the course which Spain had taken in reference to France, dismissed the Spanish *chargé d'affaires* from his court : the king of Spain, affronted by this treatment, dismissed, in like manner, the Russian *chargé d'affaires* ; whereupon Paul issued a declaration of war, which was met with great dignity by the king of Spain, and there the matter ended. The real cause, it is said, of Paul's fury, was the refusal of the king of Spain to acknowledge him as grand master of Malta.

the confederation. But another motive pressed also upon him which was, perhaps, as persuasive as any of the rest.

For a considerable period past a few of the knights of Malta had been plotting the surrender, or more properly the sale of their island to Russia; and had incessantly importuned Catherine on the subject, urging upon her attention the great importance it would be to her in her projects upon the Greek empire. Catherine, however, refused to entertain their treacherous offers; but Paul was not so scrupulous. He at once embraced the proposals of the knights; but, just as he was concluding this disgraceful bargain, intelligence was received that Napoleon had appeared before Malta with the fleet which afterwards sailed with him for Egypt, and that the fortress, which was held to be impregnable, capitulated without firing a shot. The whole secret of this easy conquest of Malta was, that Napoleon was beforehand with Paul in his negotiations for the purchase. One section amongst the knights, amongst whom was baron Homspesch, the grand master, had terminated the arrangement while Paul was, as usual, wasting his time over details. The terms were for the grand master 600,000 francs, a principality in Germany, or a pension for life of 300,000 francs, and for the French chevaliers a pension of 700 francs per annum each. The cause of this mean and profligate conspiracy against the honour and independance of that proud order whose towers were the ancient bulwark of the Christian world, is to be traced to personal dissensions amongst the knights. Those chevaliers who were not of German descent disliked baron Homspesch because he was a German, and the basest intrigues were practised by the parties which were thus raised up, having, without any communication with each other, the same object in common—the sale of the rights and freedom of the island. In this state of internal dissension the defence of the fortifications was impossible. The leading knights, who were amongst the chief conspirators had taking their measures so cau-

tiously, that when the fleet arrived the batteries were unarmed, there were neither stores nor ammunition for the troops, and the garrison was scattered in such disadvantageous situations, that even had there been a disinclination to capitulate, they were destitute of the means of resistance. Thus fell one of the most splendid fortresses in the world; and the treasure of St. John, the magnificent plate of the public foundations, the accumulated spoils of ages with all the ships of war, artillery, and muniments of the order, were seized upon by the republic.

This event appears to have first led Paul to contemplate a participation in the war against this ambitious and encroaching power. He was easily moved by circumstances that came home directly to himself, although on matters of a more comprehensive nature he was slow of conviction, and still more sluggish in action. He had, in fact, already appointed a governor for Malta, and made preparations to garrison it with Russian troops, when the news of its surrender arrived. The genius of Napoleon seemed to haunt and disturb every quarter of the globe. Already Naples, Genoa, Venice, had been trampled down; Switzerland revolutionized and occupied; Egypt invaded almost at the same moment that Malta was taken, and now a protracted negotiation was going forward at Rastadt, from which Russia was excluded, for the settlement of the Germanic empire; at which the French, with their usual arrogance, made demands which could not have been granted consistently with the previous treaty of Campo Fornio, or the independence of Germany. But, even if these circumstances were not sufficient to draw Paul into the contest, the destruction of the French fleet at the battle of the Nile, which broke the charm of republican invincibility, and released Europe from the unconfessed apprehensions which the unparalleled prowess of France had produced, must have determined him. It was felt that the moment was arrived when the torrent might be effectually arrested, and that a combined movement at

this juncture, followed up with vigour, could not fail to be attended with the most triumphant results.

1798. The impetuous ambition of France had arrayed against it almost every nation that could bring an army into the field. The conduct of the directory in Switzerland and Italy had raised the hostility of the centre of Europe, while their expedition against Egypt had called up the implacable hatred of the Turks, and the subjugation of Malta had, at last, forced Russia, the most reluctant of all, to engage in this extraordinary confederation. Paul agreed to assist Austria (who had already 240,000 men, supported by an immense artillery, ready to take the field), with 60,000 Russians, and he entered into a treaty of alliance with England on the 18th December 1798; the conditions of which were, that Russia was to furnish an auxiliary force of 45,000 men, to act with the British troops in the north of Germany; and that England, who was the grand almoner of this expensive war, was to provide a monthly subsidy of 75,000*l.*, independently of an immediate advance of 225,000*l.** Having concluded this treaty, Paul proceeded, with all the vehemence and restlessness of his character, to carry out all its provisions, and, at once, became one of the most ardent members of the alliance. He gave an asylum to Louis XVIII. in the capital of Courland; treated the French emigrants, who sought refuge in his dominions, with munificent hospitality; received the title and office of grand master of Malta, notwithstanding the previous intrusion of Napoleon into the sacred precincts of St. John, and employed all the means in his power to excite the spirit of resistance to the principles of republican France. He desired to accomplish a complete and permanent league

* The expenses of Great Britain this year, 1798—9, the year of the Irish rebellion, when Mr. Pitt introduced the property tax, were almost incredible. Notwithstanding the enormous parliamentary grant in the first instance, a supplementary budget was brought forward in June, 1799. Loans were contracted in the two budgets to the amount of 15,000,000*l.* and the total expenditure, exclusive of the charges of the debt, amounted to no less than 31,000,000*l.*!

amongst all the sovereigns of Europe not merely to arrest the progress of anarchy and democratic principles, but to restore all the interests that had been swept away by the French arms, and even to reunite, in one common bond of unity, all the followers of Christ, making an universal church which should embrace all believers in the Christian dispensation, and appease for ever the controversies that had hitherto agitated the several Christian communities. These visionary and capitivating projects amused the inconstant Paul, but were not calculated to inspire his allies with confidence in his judgment.

That there was some contradiction in the part which Russia took in this war, and that neutrality, had it been as safe, would have been a more consistent course of policy, cannot be denied. It was an anomaly, such as has rarely been witnessed in the revolutions of states, to see the grand patriarch of the Greek church assume the office of grand master of the catholic order of St. John of Malta; and it was not less curious, that the same functionary who, in his ecclesiastical capacity, had anathematised the pope, should afterwards be found taking his holiness under his special protection. The union with the Turks of the grand master of Malta, whose first vow was the extermination of the Mussulmans, was also an admixture of conflicting elements; and the advance of the battalions of Russia, decorated with the catholic cross of St. John of Jerusalem, the schismatic cross of St. Andrew of Russia, and the protestant cross of St. Anne of Holstein, fighting beside the standard of the prophet to re-establish the pope in Rome, catholicism in France, and Islamism in Egypt, was a sight still more strange and perplexing.* Nothing certainly could have excused such a labyrinth of contradictions but the grand necessity which overruled them all.

The intense interest which Paul took in the progress of the preparations against France, led him to attempt

* All the French republican writers, dwell upon the conduct of Paul on this occasion, with great bitterness; which is, of course, natural enough. The author of the *Secret Memoirs*, is amongst the most poignant of them; but he is by no means the most argumentative.

the hopeless project of extending the coalition, by endeavouring to induce Frederic William III. of Prussia, to enter into it. He despatched his crafty councillor, the old prince Repnin to Berlin, with instructions to use all the arguments of which he was capable, to induce the king to fall into the plans of the confederation. But the able agents of the republic, Caillard and Sièyes, anticipated the prince in his mission, and the mind of the king was so fortified against his proposals, that the prince withdrew from an embassy which he saw was fruitless, and which, if he persisted, could only terminate in sullyng his diplomatic reputation. At Dresden and Vienna he was more fortunate; and, in concert with Mr. Pitt, he succeeded in breaking up the negotiations that were then going forward at Rastadt between the German and French governments. These negotiations had been procrastinated for a considerable time, and so many points of difference had been turned up in the course of them, that it did not require much provocation at either side to bring them to a sudden rupture. The French had demanded in the first instance, all the islands of the Rhine, the military importance of which was of the highest consideration; they also required to be put in possession of Kehl and its territory opposite to Strasburg, and Cassel and its territory opposite to Mayence; that a piece of ground should be ceded to them, sufficient for the formation of a *tête-du-pont* at the German side of the bridge of Huningen; and that the fortress of Ehrenbreitzen (commanding the junction of the Rhine and the Moselle, and the town of Coblentz) should be demolished. In reply to these inordinate demands, the German deputation refused to accede to any other basis than the recognition of the *thalweg* (or division of the valley by the middle of the stream), as the principle of separation. By this basis, the cession of Kehl, Cassel, the *tête-du-pont* at Huningen, and the demolition of Ehrenbreitzen, all of which lay at the German side of the river, were peremptorily declined. After some further conferences,

however, concessions were made at both sides, and the negotiation appeared to be drawing towards an amicable conclusion, notwithstanding the exasperation that was felt by the emperor, when the proceedings were interrupted by intelligence of the march of a Russian army through Moravia. Upon receipt of this news the French government immediately issued a note, declaring that they would consider the advance of that army across the German frontier equivalent to a declaration of war. The troops, however, secretly informed by prince Repnin of the progress of the conference, continued to advance, and so the negotiations at Rastadt were virtually broken up, and the war renewed with greater violence and animosity at both sides than had ever marked it before.

The march of the Russian army across the south of Germany was, all circumstances considered, more orderly and creditable than could have been anticipated. These formidable battalions, comparatively strangers in Europe, and unaccustomed to that rigorous discipline which the troops of more civilized countries are subjected to in an enemy's territory, were strictly enjoined to observe as much decorum as possible in the territories of the allies, and it was announced to them at the same time, that they might indemnify themselves for this forbearance when they reached France. The necessity of carrying this injunction rigidly into effect, was rendered still more imperative by the uncouth and savage conduct of general Lvof, second in command to Rosmberg.

General Lvof was a man entirely destitute of military talent, but who had succeeded, by his coarse and sensual humour, in ingratiating himself into the favour of Pohlenkin and Zubof. His antipathy to the Austrians, which he made no scruple at all times to avow, pointed him out as a very unfit person to take a post in an army which was to act in concert with the legions of the empire; and, as might have been foreseen, he had scarcely passed the frontier when his violence, rapacity, and despotism betrayed too plainly the contempt and aversion in which he held the people. The Russians, habituated

to live at discretion among the Poles, and encouraged by the example of their officers to commit the most lawless excesses, without incurring any responsibility whatever, were not tardy in emulating the brutality of Lvof; and, at last, loud complaints reached Vienna of the barbarous practices of the new allies. Sometimes they appropriated whatever they put their hands on, making free quarters wherever they went; sometimes they ill-treated the local authorities; and on one occasion general Lvof was bold enough to strike with his cane an Austrian officer who ventured to remonstrate with him upon the proceedings of the troops. An insult so gross and unprovoked, and so subversive of military discipline, could not be overlooked, and a strong representation of the fact, and of the general conduct of the army, was immediately forwarded to Paul, from the Austrian court. This representation produced the desired effect. Paul transmitted peremptory instructions to Rosamberg, by a courier extraordinary, to send Lvof, bound hand and foot, to Petersburg, requiring, in the first instance, that the offender should be stript of all his honours—his orders and his uniform—in the front of the troops; and enjoining that all such objectionable practices should be prohibited for the future. The disgrace of Lvof, and the stern spirit in which this prohibition was announced, made some impression upon the troops; but it was still evident that a wider reform was necessary before the Austrian soldiers could be induced to admit these northern warriors to a close alliance. The advance of the army continued by short marches throughout the winter; and the sensation it created was, perhaps, never equalled in Europe. The approach of an immense body of men through the snows of Russia, for the purpose of invading a country whose battalions they had never yet encountered, and of which they scarcely knew any thing, preceded by a reputation for hardihood, bravery, and barbarity which made them almost as much dreaded by their friends as they were by their enemies, was a circumstance so strange in itself, and the remote results of

which it was so difficult to calculate, that even the emperor and empress, as if they were anxious to give the most favourable turn to this extraordinary movement, went to meet them in person, so soon as they had reached Brunn. It was evident that Austria, England, and the Condeans placed their last hopes in the aid of Russia. The prowess of the Russian infantry at Pultowa, Cunnernsdorff, Choczim, and Ismael, where they enacted miracles of valour, and displayed a power of combination for which they had not previously obtained credit in the estimation of the European governments ; and the severe service which the cavalry had seen in the war with the Turks, justified the utmost reliance that could be placed upon their support : while the enormous population of Russia, amounting at that period, in Europe alone, to 35,000,000, and doubling itself every forty years, appeared to promise for future contingencies an inexhaustible supply of men. But the anxious anticipations of the emperor, upon meeting this auxiliary force, were considerably diminished by finding at its head an obscure commander, whose name was utterly unknown in Europe, and whose military capacity for the arduous labours that lay before him remained yet to be proved. Rosamberg, in fact, had been recommended to Paul by his subserviency and acquiescence in the fantastic changes he introduced into the army ; and, to the astonishment of the whole empire, was suddenly elevated from the command of a corps in the Kuban, to displace Suwarrow in the most important campaign in which the Russian arms had ever been engaged. Paul did not calculate upon the effect of this measure, in reference both to the troops and the allies ; but he was soon apprised of it by the archduke palatine, who was then at St. Petersburg, concluding a treaty of marriage with the grand duchess Alexandra, and who, at the instance of the emperor, represented to Paul the absolute necessity of recalling Suwarrow, a general whose fame would be a *prestige* of victory, and whose influence over the army was of the last consequence under existing circumstances. There

were some difficulties and scruples to be overcome at both sides. The Austrians were too proud to submit to the command of Russian generals, who were not men of distinguished character in the field; and Paul could not suffer so large a Russian force to be placed under the orders of an Austrian. The only alternative that presented itself to put an end to the difficulty was the appointment of Suwarrow; but the petty resentment which Paul felt towards that remarkable man interposed, and it was not until repeated remonstrances were made to him that he at last consented to sacrifice his personal feelings to the demands of the common cause.

When Suwarrow had been removed from his command in Galicia, he retired to a small house he possessed at Moscow. His reputation, his popularity with the soldiers, and the exaggerated accounts of his achievements, that had obtained credence with the lower classes, rendered him an object of universal interest. The crowds that gathered around him, and the general excitement that was manifested wherever he appeared, gave such offence to Paul, that he issued an order requiring the old general to leave the city. This order, which banished him to a remote village, was communicated to him by an officer of police; when Suwarrow, with an air of apparent indifference, inquired what time was allowed him for settling his affairs. "Four hours," replied the functionary. "Oh!" exclaimed Suwarrow, who had great powers of mimicry, and who adapted the inflection of his voice to the sarcasm of the expression, "this is too kind!—an hour is sufficient for Suwarrow;" and putting up his gold and jewels in a case, he instantly left the house. A travelling carriage awaited him at the door, but he looked at it with contempt. "Suwarrow has no need of a coach to go into exile," he said, "he can repair thither in the same equipage which he made use of to repair to the court of Catherine, or to the head of the armies:—bring me a cart!" A *kibitka*, or cart, one of the most inconvenient modes of travelling that is known even in

Russia, was provided accordingly, and the veteran, accompanied by the police officer, performed in this vehicle, a dreary route of 500 versts. Suwarrow, stretched on a mattress, and wrapped up in his cloak, was insensible to all the discomforts of this rude conveyance. Arrived at the appointed village, he took up his residence at a wooden hut, under the *surveillance* of a major and some subaltern officers of police. This was a new life to Suwarrow. The bustling, active, and exciting habits of the camp, which had become a sort of second nature to him who had spent the flower of his life in fields of war, were exchanged for a scene of complete solitude and insulation. He was not suffered to write, nor to receive visitors, and the only resource he was permitted — which, however, we can hardly suppose was of much pleasure or utility to him — was reading. At length his daughter was allowed to see him, but although the interview was short, it appears to have worked, through her influence, upon the feelings of Paul ; who, shortly afterwards relented, or, perhaps, acting with his usual caprice, resolved to contradict his former harshness by a sudden exhibition of magnanimity. A courier was sent to Suwarrow with a dispatch, addressed on the outside, “To Field-Marshal Suwarrow,” but the old warrior, after reading the direction, deliberately said, “This letter is not for me ; if Suwarrow were field-marshal, he would not be banished to a village — he would be seen at the head of the army ;” and returning the letter to the courier, refused to open it. In vain the courier represented to him that he had strict injunctions to deliver it: he was obliged to return with it sealed to the emperor. That the circumstance chafed and irritated Paul, there can be no doubt ; but, he was prudent enough to conceal his vexation. He took no public notice of the affair, but the guard on Suwarrow was rendered more strict than before ; and shortly afterwards, being about to make an excursion to Kuban, which would carry him into the province where the brave and inflexible veteran was confined,

he ordered him to repair to St. Petersburg, where he thought he could be kept with "greater privacy. It was at this crisis that the allies interfered to solicit, at the hands of Paul, the recal of this distinguished general to the command of the troops. The moment Suwarrow found himself reinstated, and placed in a situation to gratify his ancient passion for marching against the French, he forgot all the injuries he had sustained. The whole empire looked forward to the issue of the campaign with unbounded enthusiasm, and Suwarrow set out for the army, to fulfil the prophecy he had made to his soldiers, loaded with honours, and confident of success.

1799. The eccentricities of this fearless general were as well known to the Austrians as his valour; and it did not, therefore, excite much surprise that, upon the road to join the troops and take the general direction of the allied army, he exhibited that extravagant superstition in the observance of religious forms through which he had always maintained such an influence over the Russian soldiers. One of the most important features in his method of controlling the troops was the appeal which he constantly made to their religious feelings. He carried this to an unprecedented excess. The march of the army was constantly interrupted to make genuflections and recite prayers before the road-side crucifixes and images. Whenever he met a monk or priest, Suwarrow invariably approached him with an air of singular and almost burlesque reverence, and making the most humble acknowledgments of his Christian weakness, asked for his benediction on the great business in which he was engaged, for he was going, he said, to chastise the enemies of God and religion, the infidels, rebels, and regicides of France. The churches and convents, wherever he passed, were visited with due solemnity; and Suwarrow, after performing all the requisite ceremonials to testify the depth of his devotion, covered himself with relics as safeguards and amulets in the moment of danger. He also revived an ancient prejudice of the Russians—

a sort of article of faith amongst the most illiterate of the peasants — which was, that the soldier who died under his colours, fighting against the infidels, would come to life again at the end of three days, and find himself happily restored to his home, and free from the obligation of serving for the rest of his life. This piece of shameless fanaticism had grown obsolete ; but, upon this occasion, it was resorted to by Suwarrow as being admirably adopted to serve the purposes of the hour ; nor did he miscalculate upon its efficacy. It had a wonderful effect in stimulating the confidence and courage of the troops. These extraordinary performances in a warrior so distinguished by his ferocity, astonished the court of Vienna, but the policy that dictated such a display of superabundant piety was admitted as a valid excuse for its exhibition. Suwarrow knew the metal and prejudices of the Russians better than any man of the age.

The peculiar mode of warfare which Suwarrow's experience in the field had led him to appreciate as the most effective, was totally different from that system of tactics by which civilised nations are enabled to prolong their contests indefinitely. Suwarrow, unconscious of any sensations of fear, always rushed at once into the heat of the action, sweeping the enemy before him with the fury of a tempest, and succeeding partly by the violence of the attack, and partly by the terrors of his appearance. He was restless and vigorous, and possessed the advantage which the reputation of invincibility confers upon a commander. The bayonet was the weapon upon which he chiefly relied for making an impression upon the ranks of the enemy, and to that circumstance, perhaps, may be attributed the superiority of the Russian infantry. While the cavalry were poorly equipped, and indifferently skilled in military science, the infantry were admirably disciplined, strong, hardy, and endowed with an obstinate spirit which rendered them conspicuous throughout the war. The impetuous character of Suwarrow is not inaptly illustrated by his answer to

general Chastelar, chief staff officer in the Austrian service, when that officer proposed a reconnoissance on one occasion. "Reconnoissance! I am for none of them; they are of no use but to the timid, and to inform the enemy that you are coming. It is never difficult to find your opponents when you really wish it. Form columns; charge bayonets; plunge into the centre of the enemy; these are my reconnoissances."

The Russians were exactly the description of soldiers who could best fulfil these instructions. There is no soldier in Europe better able to bear fatigue, or who exhibits more perfect submission to the commands of his officer. When they sack towns, and, as usual, seize upon the property of the inhabitants, they always lay aside the largest share of the plunder for their officers. This fact is the more remarkable in consequence of the existence of a certain common stock in every Russian regiment, known by the name of the *artel*, in which all extra allowances or incidental benefits are deposited for the use of the body at large, and which, as it is open to all the soldiers, it becomes their general interest to enrich. The recruit, for instance, places in the *artel* all the money he has, and the value of the clothes he sells on receiving his uniform; the property of deceased comrades also falls to it; and the whole of the pillage which each individual, as well as the troops or company, happen to take in time of war. The Russian soldier being enlisted for life, and thus divorced from all other interests and private associations, is accustomed to look to the *artel* for all the necessaries of which he may stand in need on marches and all extraordinary occasions — such as horses, brandy, or provisions. The food of the Russian soldier is so cheap, that the maintenance of an army costs much less than could be supposed by any inference derived from the charges for the war establishments of other countries. Their provisions consist of rye-flour, peeled barley, and salt. A regular allowance is distributed monthly to each soldier, who prepares his meals agreeably to his own taste, producing a sort of

bread, biscuit, or a mess called *kascha*, which he considers himself fortunate to be enabled sometimes to flavour with such luxuries as onions, hemp-oil, or candle-grease. In addition to these, he makes a drink called *quass*, of fermented flour, which is very grateful to him, but which would be unpalatable to people unaccustomed to use it. Whenever he is quartered in the neighbourhoods of rivers, or on the banks of the numerous lakes in the north, he adds fish and mushrooms to his repast; and, in the southern provinces, he avails himself of the fruit and the leguminous herbs which abound in those districts. The entire charges of a Russian soldier do not cost the government more than five levies per month. A body of men who could live on such fare, and, at the same time, encounter with comparative indifference the worst extremities of the season and the most harassing fatigue, were naturally adapted for the sort of service to which they were likely to be exposed under such a commander as Suwarrow. The endurance of the Russians is unparalleled, and enables them to carry out their discipline under circumstances which would utterly disconcert and paralyze the presence of mind of other troops. Their devotion to their duty is fortunately seconded by such great physical powers, that no privations, dangers, or labours, will make them neglectful of its obligations. In the bitterest weather and the most exhausting campaigns, the soldier is at the post of danger assigned to him, and no perils, however close at hand, can induce him to abandon it. This spirit of precision and of implicit obedience to orders, may, perhaps, be attributed to the example of Suwarrow, who was so rigid a disciplinarian on points of practical duty, that he even held himself responsible for submission to his own orders. Thus, at dinner, one of his *aides-de-camp* would suddenly rise from table in the midst of the entertainment, and, approaching Suwarrow, forbid him to eat any more. "By whose order am I forbidden?" the general would demand: "By the order of field-marshal Suwarrow,"

would be the reply ; when Suwarrow would immediately leave his chair, exclaiming, " He must be obeyed ! " The great regularity which the Russian troops thus obtained gave them great advantages over the Turks, especially in the observance of a constant rule to close up their ranks as fast as they were pierced ; so that, in fact, they were rarely broken, and the troop seldom defeated. It has been truly observed of these remarkable men, that if they have not the facility of rallying after a defeat, which their high degree of individual intelligence have given to the French soldiers, they have greater firmness in resisting it.

Amongst the troops which were most distinguished, but which have latterly, from a variety of causes, fallen into gradual decline, were the Cossacks, especially the Cossacks of the Don. Mounted upon small and lean but indefatigable horses, which, like their masters, are bred in the *steppes*, and insensible to the inclemency of the atmosphere, to thirst, and to hunger, these vigorous soldiers form one of the most imposing elements in the composition of the Russian armies. They do not receive any pay, even in time of war, and are at all periods liable to be called out into active service. They provide themselves with horses, arms, clothing, and provisions, except a small allowance of meal, which is occasionally meted out to them. Their subsistence, therefore, is chiefly derived from plunder, and their progress is uniformly marked by murder, robberies, fires, and rapine ; and may be traced by the desolation which they leave behind them. Their principal instrument of warfare is a pike, fifteen feet in length, which they hold vertically in the right stirrup, but which they are ready to couch with inconceivable celerity in the moment of attack. This pike, which to other cavalry soldiers would be an exceedingly inconvenient weapon, is used with such dexterity by the Cossack, that he makes it subservient to a variety of purposes. By its aid, he springs into the saddle, seizing the mane of the horse by the left hand, and holding the pike in his right, as a

prop ; and he possesses such a command over it by the force of habit, that he appears scarcely to feel it in his grasp. He wears no spurs, but carries a heavy whip suspended to his left wrist. An indifferent sabre, one or two pistols, and a carbine, complete his equipment, but these he seldom employs, and is not very skilful in their use. The Cossacks are usually distributed in platoons over different parts of the army, in the rear and in advance, often at considerable distances. They are brought into action as a species of flying outwork, or upon such duties as demand extraordinary activity, vigilance, and perseverance. They penetrate into the most dangerous and difficult places with incredible boldness and address, and, gathering like clouds round an army in motion, they secure it on every side from danger, and effectually conceal its movements. Their instinct is almost as universal in its reach as it is wonderful in its results. Like blood-hounds, they scent the track of the enemy, and in the trodden grass can not only read the number of men and horses that have passed, but, calculate by the traces, the time that has passed in the interval. The sagacity with which they prosecute their journey through a strange country, and discover the best places for ambuscades and bivouacks, is hardly credible. In their own monotonous solitudes, from the Azof to the Danube, covered with long undulating grass, where there is no tree, nor hill, nor building, to interrupt the dismal uniformity, which is broken only by the slight hillocks that, in a few insulated places, denote the burial-grounds of unknown generations, this spirit of divination is nurtured in the Cossack by the necessity of circumstances. He never loses his way through these trackless deserts. The stars direct his footsteps by night ; and even when the storm has quenched their lustre in the sky, the habit of exercising his other senses in the dark, enables him to discriminate his path with singular success. Alighting at a *kurgan**, or hillock of the dead, he examines the

* These are conic hillocks, and are principally found in the deserts of

sides of the declivity exposed to the south and the north, for certain herbs and plants which thrive best in those aspects, and which he can distinguish by the touch, if darkness obscure them from his sight. The information he thus procures, guides him forward on his way, from one grave-spot to another, the hillocks serving as a compass to direct him to the point by which he may regain the camp or locality to which he is bound. By day, the Cossack is assisted by all the visible and palpable agencies of nature ; the sun, and the winds, which in these latitudes are tolerably regular in their periodical course, are efficient and explicit guides : he derives from the birds also a strange and poetical intelligence — their numbers, the direction and manner of their flight, their species, and the music of their songs, indicate to him the proximity of rivers, of herds, of habitations, or of armies. Bands composed of such daring and observant men, are not merely useful to the army upon whose flanks they hang, but formidable in the most unexpected way to the enemy. Their invincible energy, their headlong valour, and their irregular and skirmishing mode of warfare, coming in suddenly like a gust, and vanishing as rapidly, only to appear again in an opposite direction, with a speed which the imagination can scarcely comprehend, have the effect of keeping the enemy in a constant state of alarm and suspense. But the habits of lawlessness which the Cossack has acquired, from the mistaken economy and harsh conduct of the government towards them and their territories, renders it necessary to employ them cautiously in a battle. If they mingled in the front of the action, they would probably endanger the issue by their rash and thoughtless courage ; they

Bessarabia, of the Dulista, the Bogue, of Azof, of Astrakan, and along the southern border of Siberia. The discoveries that have been made when digging some of them up, attest that they are graves. Urns of coarse potters' ware have been found in them, rusty arms, horses' bits, bones of dogs and horses, buckles, horns, chains, and other ornaments in gold and silver, as well as some medals, with inscriptions, in Greek, and languages still more remote. *Memoires Secretes, &c.*

are generally, therefore, kept at a distance, where they wait the result in order to take to flight, or to pursue the vanquished, making terrible havoc with their long pikes.* Gifted, says a modern writer†, with all the individual intelligence which belongs to the pastoral and savage character, and yet subjected to a certain degree of military discipline, they make the best of all light troops, and are more formidable to a retreating army than the *élite* of the French or Russian guards.

At the head of these mixed battalions, whose fame had already preceded them through every kingdom in Europe, Suwarrow arrived, in the month of April, in Italy, when he joined the imperial forces, still encamped on the shores of the Mincio, a few days after the important action of Magnano, which the French, at a loss how to describe such a decisive defeat, have persisted in calling by the name of the general who lost the battle—Scherer. The frankness of Suwarrow's character, which, creditable as it was to the honour of the soldier, was dangerous in a man entrusted with so important a command, soon betrayed the secret designs with which Paul had entered into the war, and which the delight that Suwarrow felt at being selected as the instrument to carry them into execution would not allow him to conceal. The chivalric and impracticable schemes of Paul, which suited the genius of his general quite as well as the more enlarged and enlightened projects of Catherine, filled the Austrian court with alarm. It had always been the design of Austria to expel the French from Italy; but the emperor had never contemplated so extensive a scheme of European redress as that which was proposed by Paul, who wished to restore all the possessions that had been acquired since the commencement of the war, to overturn the new republics, and, in short, to replace every thing in the same state in which it existed before the French revolution broke out. The obvious operation of this extravagant design would have

* *Memoires Secretes*, &c.

† Alison, *History of Europe*, &c.

been to compel Austria to relinquish the productive and convenient Venetian territories, which she had attained under treaty from the French, and which afforded her a safe passage at all times into the plains of Italy, for the remote and insurgent provinces of Flanders, which would neither be available to her by position, nor valuable in any other point of view. The discovery of these masked plans, through the blundering revelations of Suwarrow, produced at once a strong feeling of distrust on the part of the Austrians, and laid the foundation of secret jealousies which were more likely to be increased than to be subdued by the glorious victories achieved by their union.

CHAP. VI.

SUWARROW JOINS THE AUSTRIANS. — BRILLIANT MANŒUVRE OF THE ALLIES ON THE ADDA. — THEY FOLLOW UP THEIR SUCCESS, AND TAKE ALEXANDRIA. — MOREAU CROSSES THE APPENINES, AND JOINS VICTOR. — TOTAL EVACUATION OF PIEDMONT AND LOMBARDY BY THE FRENCH. — CONCERTED OPERATIONS BETWEEN MACDONALD AND MOREAU. — ACTIVITY OF SUWARROW. — SANGUINARY BATTLE OF THE TREBBIA. — RETREAT OF MACDONALD. — CAUSES OF HIS FAILURE. — SUWARROW TURNS TO PURSUE MOREAU. — HIS MOVEMENTS ARE CHECKED BY THE IMPOLITIC ORDERS OF THE AULIC COUNCIL. — JEALOUSY GROWS UP AMONST THE ALLIES. — ITS CONSEQUENCES. — MOREAU IS SUPERSEDED, AND JOUBERT APPOINTED GENERALISSIMO OF THE FRENCH. — BATTLE OF NOVI. — CLOSE OF THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN IN ITALY.

THE republican army had just sustained a signal defeat, 1799. when Suwarrow reached the Austrian encampment, and Moreau had superseded Scherer in the command. The condition in which Moreau found the French troops rendered it impossible for him to maintain his position. They were reduced to the number of 28,000; and so wasted by sickness and by slaughter, that Moreau, unable to maintain the line of the Oglio, retired towards Milan, leaving immense military stores, parks of artillery, and a bridge equipage in the hands of the imperialists. This movement considerably facilitated the operations of the allies; the plan already arranged between the archduke and Suwarrow being that of making such a diversion of the French armies in Switzerland and Italy as would enable the allies ultimately to prevent all communication between them; and, forming a junction of their own troops, to penetrate into France by the defiles of the Jura and the defenceless Vosges.

The dangerous situation in which Moreau found himself placed by the rapid successes of the allied forces,

compelled him to retire upon the mountains of Genoa, and finally to take up a position on the right bank of the Adda, which being much more lofty than the left, affords a complete command of the opposite side of the river. Suwarrow, despatching a force of 20,000 men under the command of the Austrian general Kray, to invest Peschiera and Mantua, hastened to follow Moreau; and, before the French had time to concentrate their strength, forced the passage of the river in two places, thus dividing the enemy's battalions into three parts, which enabled him to beat them in detail. One division was driven back towards Milan with a loss of 2400 men, including 1100 prisoners; another, after a brave resistance, threw down their arms with 7000 men; while the third was thrown into such consternation that they fled at the first shock, the Russians mingling with them pell-mell, as they rushed across the bridge. Suwarrow, elated by this brilliant opening of the campaign, in which the French lost altogether upwards of 11,000 men, besides being driven from their most formidable positions, pushed on for Milan (which the republicans, dejected by such accumulated misfortunes, had forsaken in despair), and entered that capital in triumph on the 29th April, amid the acclamations of the delighted multitude. The French officers, who were made prisoners by Suwarrow, expected to meet the most barbarous treatment; but were surprised to find that instead of being put to death, as they anticipated, they were received by Suwarrow with a sort of ironical ceremony that humiliated their national pride, but inflicted no severer punishment upon them. The French historians admit this to be true; but they state that, in order to protect the French soldiers who were captured during this war, the Austrians found it necessary to escort them through the ranks of the ferocious Russians, who would otherwise have massacred them without hesitation.

The festivities of Milan so utterly absorbed and dazzled the northern general, that, instead of pursuing his success with that promptitude and decision which so

strongly marked his character, he lingered for more than a week in the brilliant capital, while the shattered remnants of the French troops, broken up into two columns, obtained time to effect their retreat, after securing the communications with the adjacent passes of the Alps; — the one towards Alexandria, with a view to occupy the defiles of Bocchetta and the approaches to Genoa; and the other, commanded by Moreau, to the plain between the Po and the Tanaro, at the foot of the northern slope of the Apennines. Suwarrow at last emerged from Milan, and took the road for Alexandria. All the principal places had already yielded to the allies, and pushing onwards they extended their advanced posts, with a reinforcement of 6000 Russians, so far to the right of Moreau's position as to threaten his communication with France. This, however, was only a feint. The real design was to force the Po, turn the left of the French, and draw them into a general and conclusive action. The eyes of Europe were earnestly fixed upon the approaching contest, upon which the destinies of Italy seemed to depend.

In the midst of the stream, and exactly opposite to the village of Mugarone, which lay under the shelter of Moreau's lines, were some large wooded islands, which apparently afforded facilities for crossing the river. Rosamberg, who commanded one of the Russian divisions, resolved to attempt the passage at that point. On the night of the 11th of May, 6000 men effected their landing on one of the islands, and from thence succeeded in gaining the village, which they took possession of without difficulty. Moreau, however, no sooner heard of this descent, than he poured down upon the allies with such irresistible force, that they were compelled to retire; and notwithstanding that succour was immediately forwarded by Suwarrow, and a diversion was made in the direction of Marengo, the attempt to make an impression in that quarter was a total failure. Suwarrow, therefore, at once resolved to abandon the object he originally proposed in occupying the opposite bank of the Po, and

to march at once upon Turin, which was the chief depôt of the French magazines, and, by reducing that citadel, to spread his forces over the Piedmontese plains to the foot of the Alps, thus intercepting the communications of Moreau with France. But Moreau, anticipating some such movement on the part of the enemy, aware also of the importance of preserving his communication with the Alps, and forced, by the insurrection which was now gaining ground amongst the peasantry of Piedmont, to forsake his position on the Po, had determined at the same moment to retire, by Asti, upon Turin and Coni, the last fortified place on the Italian side of the Alps, where he proposed to remain until the reinforcements which had been promised from France had arrived. Thus, by an extraordinary coincidence, these generals laid their plans to gain, by different routes, the same ultimate point.

Intelligence having reached Suwarrow of the retreat of Moreau, he immediately threw a body of troops into Valence and Casala, which had just been abandoned by the French; and ordering forward a strong detachment to invest Alexandria, he advanced by rapid marches at the head of the main body to Turin. Partly by the treachery of some of the inhabitants, the advanced guard surprised one of the gates, and throwing open the town to the troops, the garrison were pursued to the citadel, in which they took refuge. The quantity of artillery, of ammunition, and military stores, which the allies obtained by this conquest, was enormous. This sudden stroke of victory, more appalling and decisive than any that had hitherto been felt by the French, increased incalculably the difficulties of their situation; and Moreau, whose spirit was invincible to the last, still hoping to form a junction with the army at Naples, under the command of Macdonald, endeavoured to regain his position on the west of the Apennines, so as to cover the avenues to Genoa. The circumstances in which Moreau was placed at this juncture were desperate; but his great presence of mind and military tact

enabled him to vanquish them by one of the most brilliant and rapid movements on record. Suwarrow was close upon his rear ; the only available route for artillery was blocked up ; and if he were to have retired by the Col di Tende, all hope of joining Macdonald must have been surrendered, and certain destruction awaited his army. In this fearful dilemma, he succeeded by indefatigable labour in rendering a rugged mountain path, leading across the chain of the Apennines from the valley of Garessio to the coast of Genoa, practicable for artillery and chariots, in four days ; and posting a strong rear-guard to cover his retreat, he defiled in excellent order over the precipitous track, and reached the southern side of the mountains without meeting a single interruption. Here Moreau formed a junction with Victor, who had occupied all the lines stretching towards Genoa over the Apennines, and the reunited fragments of the French forces now covered the brow of the heights from Loano to the Bocchetta.

The campaign of the republican army in this part of Italy was now drawing to a close. Suwarrow, when he learned that Moreau had retired from Piedmont, swiftly distributed his legions over the plains, and penetrated the deep glens of the Alps. Suza and Pignerol had already surrendered, and Ferrara had fallen before the arms of Kray ; a Venetian fleet had shaken the walls of Ravenna to the centre, and an insurrection amongst the valiant mountaineers of Tuscany had succeeded in recovering Arezzo and Lucca. The conquests of Napoleon in these sunny vallies and rich plains had melted from the grasp of France more rapidly than his conquering hosts had traversed them. Nothing remained of these acquisitions but the citadel of Turin, which was closely invested by 40,000 of the allied troops under the command of Suwarrow, and Tortona and Alexandria, which were both in a state of siege ; and thus, in the short period of three months, the whole of Lombardy was regained, with the exception of a few fortresses ; and the French standards, which had but

recently floated on the towers of the principal cities, were now shivering in the desolate snows of the Alps.

The signal discomfiture of the French in Lombardy, — where they had established two republics, and where they especially calculated upon the support of the people, — rendered it imperative upon them to strengthen their lines on that side, in order to protect themselves against the impending consequences of their retreat, in the event of Suwarrow attempting to pass the frontier. Orders were, therefore, immediately transmitted to Macdonald, to evacuate the south of Italy, and to hasten with his troops to the assistance of the broken remains of the army of Lombardy. At the head of 20,000 men, Macdonald, with marvellous rapidity, departed from Naples: the whole country was in a state of insurrection; but, by the exercise of singular discretion and vigilance, he made good his retreat to Rome, where he was reinforced by the divisions of Gauthier; then passing on to Florence, he increased his force by the addition of the battalions of Montrichard; and establishing his head-quarters at Lucca towards the beginning of June, he opened an immediate communication with Moreau.

The plan of operations concerted between these generals was this:—Macdonald was to cross the Apennines towards Tortona, the left wing of his troops stretching to the right bank of the Po; while Moreau was to move at once into the plain of the Serravalle; a strong division at the same moment pouring down into the valley of the Trebbia, to keep up a constant telegraph between the two armies. This disposition of the French forces, acting upon the great points of conquest of the allied troops, was so formidable as to demand, on the opposite side, the most prompt and vigorous measures, which were rendered still more necessary by the dispersion of the numerous detachments over the vast plains of Lombardy. While the main body of the allies, 28,000 strong, were encamped round Turin, its outposts established as far as the gorges of

the Alps, 24,000 men, under Kray, covered in part the banks of the Lower Po, and were partly occupied in the trenches of Mantua ; another corps, 15,000 strong, was preparing for the sieges of Como and the Tyrol ; a fourth, consisting of 14,000 men, was gradually piercing the Valais by the Simplon and the pass of Nuffenen ; and several smaller bodies were scattered over the country, agreeably to the old system of throwing a cordon of bayonets around a newly acquired territory. The designs of Moreau and Macdonald were first announced to Suwarrow, by the receipt of intelligence that the latter general had crossed the Apennines to Bologna on the 7th of June ; and, appearing in the Modena with 37,000 men, gained a signal victory over prince Hohenzollern, who commanded in that district, and who, in this fatal engagement, lost 1500 men. This important movement was followed with celerity by still greater successes. Macdonald speedily became master of Parma, Placentia, and the whole of that country, compelling field-marshal Ott, who was stationed at the entrance of the lateral valley of the Taro, to retire behind the Tidone ; that officer declining to risk the consequences of a pitched battle which Macdonald offered him in the plains.

Suwarrow, upon this trying and eventful occasion, displayed that remarkable vigour and resolution which entitle him, notwithstanding all his peculiarities, to rank amongst the ablest commanders of modern times. He immediately recalled all his advanced posts ; instructions were transmitted to the remote points, where the scattered divisions were encamped ; and, by the 15th June, the allied forces, to the amount of 30,000 infantry and 6000 cavalry, assembled between Tortona and Placentia, almost on the same ground they had occupied only six weeks before. On the 17th of June, Suwarrow arrived in sight of the French, and resolved to attack them on the following morning. But in the mean while Macdonald had concentrated his forces, and, hoping to follow up his victories by dislodging Ott,

impetuously crossed the Tidone and the Trebbia, and had already driven back the imperialists in great disorder, when Suwarrow, despatching general Chastelar with the advanced guard of the army, turned the fortunes of the day. The French conducted their retreat in good order until they were charged in the flank by the cossacks, who threw them into the utmost confusion. These wild and fearless horsemen, plunging into the Trebbia in the pursuit, were exposed to such destructive showers of grape-shot, that they were obliged to retire ; and the two armies encamped for the night on those very plains where, nearly two thousand years before, Hannibal defeated the Roman legions. The description given by Livy of this celebrated field,—destined for the third time to witness a battle upon which the fate of Italy depended,—shows that the long lapse of time has not sensibly altered any of its features.*

Suwarrow made his preparations, during the night, for a general engagement in the morning ; and, distributing his best infantry on his right, with a view to interpose between the French left and the mountains, and so cut off the communication between Moreau and Macdonald, he established his left on the high road to Placentia, to preserve the road open to the castle. The centre was commanded by Melas, and supported by a powerful reserve under Froelich. This elaborate disposition of the imperialists, and the difficulties of the ground, retarded the intended advance of Suwarrow ; and it was noon, on the 18th, before he arrived in front of the French army, which he found drawn up in order of battle on the banks of the Trebbia. The French historians accuse Macdonald of having committed a mistake on this occasion, by waiting for the attack instead of having opened it himself : the fact, however, was, that Macdonald, who had not yet been reinforced by the divisions of Olivier and Montrichard, which did not come up until noon, was desirous of delaying the battle until the following

* Mr. Alison states that he visited this spot in 1818, and that it completely agreed with the description given of it by Livy.

day ; but the impatience of Suwarrow, who threw his infantry at once upon the left wing of the French, which rested on the mountains, compelled Macdonald to change his plans, and, seeing that the action was inevitable, he crossed the river, and charged at once upon the allies. That this movement was ill-considered and rash, is obvious, from the peril in which it placed the French troops in the event of failure, with the enemy in front and the Trebbia behind ; and the issue was such as might have been expected from the dangers of their position. They were repulsed, after a sanguinary conflict that continued until evening, and, with great loss, were forced back over the river, followed as far as Settimo by the corps commanded by general Rosamberg. When night closed upon the scene, the antagonist armies lay at both sides of the stream, which completely separated them, with the exception of the detachments under Rosamberg, which, formed into square at the rear of the French lines, kept their post during the night, the horses bridled, and the soldiers resting on their guns, within pistol-shot of the watchfires round which the exhausted troops on the opposite shores of the river were enjoying a brief and broken sleep. As daybreak approached, Rosamberg, dissatisfied with his insulated position, withdrew, and rejoined the imperialists on the Russian side of the river. But although, at some points, comparative tranquillity reigned during the interval between sunset, when the hostilities were suspended, and sunrise, when they were resumed by the entire body of the troops, a murderous cannonade was prolonged in the river nearly throughout the whole night, which almost made it appear that the battle was continued without cessation into the next day, when it was renewed with increased fury. The cause of this extraordinary nocturnal carnage was the activity of three French battalions, who, being misled by some reports of the movements of the enemy, rushed into the bed of the river at midnight, and opening a brisk fire upon the Russian videttes, startled both armies from their repose. In the confusion that ensued, it became

impossible to distinguish friends from foes; and the artillery, that played from the banks into the stream, where cavalry and infantry struggled in frantic disorder, committed indiscriminate destruction upon both.

The fatigue which the troops on both sides had endured throughout this memorable night, prevented them from resuming the attack before ten o'clock on the following morning. Macdonald and Suwarrow were equally impatient to begin, because Moreau was hourly expected from the Apennines; and while the former calculated upon being able to keep the imperialists engaged until the arrival of Moreau in their rear should completely decide the war; the latter, aware of the peril in which he was placed, saw that his only security lay in the promptitude of his motions, by which he might secure the victory before the separated columns of the republican army could be re-united. As Suwarrow was beginning to put his troops in order, the whole of the French army appeared drawn up on the opposite shore in two lines, the cavalry occupying the intervals between the columns. The first line plunged into the river, and pushing on vigorously, outflanked the Russian right. Macdonald's daring project was to turn both the flanks of the enemy, of which this successful action was the first indication. The Polish legion, that had accomplished this rapid evolution, under the command of Dombrowsky, fought with astonishing valour; they found themselves in the presence of the enemies of their country, and they availed themselves of the opportunity to revenge the injuries they had suffered. But their courage was exerted in vain against the superior numbers and obduracy of the Russians, who, throwing back their right to face the Poles, drove them back again across the river. The manœuvre, however, exposed the Russians to serious consequences. The flank which it uncovered was speedily encompassed by a cloud of French troops, who, but for the great firmness and regularity of the Russian infantry, must have cut the soldiers to pieces; as it was, they made them retire, and pursued them to the village

of Casaleggio. Here the Russians made a stand until they were reinforced by several battalions, which, coming up in the front and rear of the French, repulsed them with great loss, and compelled them to return across the Trebbia.

The contest in the centre was not less sanguinary and decisive. Olivier and Montrichard, charging under the grape-shot of the imperialists, had crossed the river, and carried with their bayonets all the batteries of the Austrians under Melas, throwing the whole line into confusion. Encouraged by this successful experiment, Montrichard pushed on to attack the division under general Forster. At this moment the French demi-brigade, 3000 strong, which guarded the interval between the centre column and the left wing, was suddenly cut off and taken in flank by prince Lichtenstein at the head of a reserve of Austrian cavalry, the flower of the allied army. This event decided the fate of the day. The whole order of battle was changed. The French found it necessary to manœuvre, in order to cover and defend themselves, which exposed them to the fire of Forster on the other side ; the battle rapidly spread along the entire line, until at length Suwarrow became master of the whole left bank of the river. He made several attempts to pass to the opposite side, but the closeness and energy of the French fire as often repulsed him ; when darkness fell upon the combatants, and terminated the third day of this destructive conflict.

Macdonald, exhausted by these losses, and afraid to risk another engagement, made a precipitate retreat in the night, abandoning his wounded, and retiring over the Nura, directed his course towards the Apennines. Thus terminated the most disastrous battle that had occurred since the commencement of the war. The total loss of the French in killed and wounded was upwards of 12,000, and that of the allies nearly as many. A despatch which Macdonald had prepared for Moreau, describing the forlorn condition of his army,

and the line of his retreat, was intercepted on the following morning by Suwarrow, who, dividing his troops under Rosamberg and Melas,—the former moving towards the Nura, and the latter advancing on Placentia,—immediately commenced a vigorous pursuit. At the Nura, Rosamberg came up with the rear-guard of the French, and attacking them both in front and flank, made a great part of them prisoners, consisting chiefly of the celebrated regiment of Auvergne, and drove the rest into the mountains; while Melas, rapidly mastering Placentia, took 5000 prisoners, including the wounded, and four of the most distinguished generals. Utterly unable to rally his dispirited soldiery, Macdonald, having by a desperate effort succeeded in dislodging Hohenzollern from Parma, retreated behind the Larda, where he reviewed his broken battalions, and discovered that his whole loss in this unfortunate campaign amounted to no less than 15,000 men. In the battle of the Trebbia, and the pursuit that ensued, the number of prisoners taken by the allies was 13,288, including the generals Olivier, Rusca, Salen, and Cambray, and 506 officers.

The French historians of these events, while they are compelled to record the victorious progress of the allied army, are unwilling to admit that Macdonald was defeated. They say that the French could not conquer, but that they were not conquered; which is a shallow subterfuge to escape from the humiliation of one of the most important engagements that had, up to that time, taken place. That both parties exhibited the highest degree of valour is not to be questioned; but that Macdonald betrayed great rashness and want of skill, and that his jealousy of Moreau led him into premature movements, in the hope of reaping, single-handed, that glory, which, had he waited for the reinforcement of Moreau's troops, would have been divided, is also true. Every thing was against him: his army was inferior in numbers to those of the enemy; it was weakened by a harassing and hazardous march, thinned by preceding

battles, and short of necessities; and it carried on its operations in a country where the people were every where opposed to it. But these considerations, instead of being urged as excuses for the misfortunes of Macdonald, might, with greater justice, be referred to as aggravations of his errors. He ought to have been more prudent than to persist against such an accumulation of impropitious circumstances. But, notwithstanding that the causes of Macdonald's failure were so obvious,—lying, indeed, upon the very surface of these transactions,—neither he nor Moreau were disposed to submit to that judgment which posterity, deciding calmly, and unmoved by the excitements of the time, must finally pronounce. “If these operations,” observed Moreau in a letter to Macdonald, “have not had all the success which we had a right to expect, it was because you had not 30,000 men, and that I had only 10,000; that the whole county had risen against us; and that the enemy had at that time 70,000 men. With such a disproportion of strength, it is, doubtless, accomplishing a great deal to avoid a defeat.” This statement, setting aside even its palpable misrepresentation of the actual grounds of Macdonald's discomfiture, is inaccurate as to facts. When Macdonald appeared in the Modena, he had an army 37,000 strong*, flushed with conquests, while Suwarrow, in the suddenness of the enemy's movements, was able to concentrate a force of only 36,000 men: and Moreau, during the battle of the Trebbia, debouched from the Apennines into the plain of Alexandria at the head of 14,000 men.

Intelligence of the progress of Moreau, who had thrown four battalions of the Austrians, under Bellegarde, into confusion, and raised the siege of Tortona, while the Russians were pursuing Macdonald, having reached Suwarrow, he prepared immediately to return and meet this new and more formidable adversary, instead of following Macdonald beyond the passes of

* The French writers differ about the actual number of Macdonald's army; but none of them estimate it at less than 35,000.

the Larda. The celerity of Suwarrow's motions throughout this campaign appear to have afforded infinite amusement to the French, who, failing to reach him in every other way, attempted to bring him into contempt by the force of ridicule. They represented him as running about with indefatigable activity, night and day, from one extremity of Lombardy to the frontiers of Piedmont, in a sorry cart; they parodied his proclamations, which, in this war, were not distinguished by that vein of bombast and extravagance which he had been accustomed to employ in Moldavia and Poland; and they reported his conversations in a strain of ribald mockery. Thus they retailed such remarks as that which he is said to have made before the battle of the Trebbia,—“After I have trounced Macdonald, I will return and trim Moreau:” and upon hearing of the march of Joubert, “Well, he is a stripling coming to school; let us go and give him a lesson.” The most mortifying part of these bragging speeches, observes one of the French authors, is that he kept his word!

As Suwarrow advanced, Moreau retreated, and finding himself hard pressed, he at last retired to his former defensive position in the mountains. In the mean while Macdonald, availing himself of the breathing time allowed to him by the retrograde movement of the Russian general, made a long and perilous march across the Apennines, and about the middle of July arrived at Genoa, with his army in a most deplorable condition,—the cavalry broken down, the artillery dismounted, and the soldiers reduced to mere shadows of that gallant armament, whose invincible banners, not three years before, had floated over all the cities of Italy. If Suwarrow had now been permitted to act upon the suggestions of his own judgment, he would have rapidly followed up his advantages, and in this memorable campaign have completed the conquest of Italy, and penetrated into the south of France. But the Aulic council, who governed the great movements of the war, had issued positive orders not to extend the operations

of the army beyond the Apennines, until after all the fortified places in Lombardy had been reduced. The siege of these fortresses had been interrupted by the desultory demands of the war ; and, with the exception of the citadel of Turin, which had been carried by a division of the allies on the 20th of June, by which they obtained 618 pieces of cannon, 40,000 muskets, and 50,000 quintals of powder, all those strong holds were garrisoned by French troops. Suwarrow, therefore, instead of pressing forward at a moment so favourable to victory, collected his forces on the Italian plains, to watch the hills of Genoa, and to cover the places that were threatened by the activity of the enemy. Upwards a month elapsed in a state of inactivity, the two armies gathering and concentrating their forces at either side of the Apennines. On the side of the republicans, great changes took place during this interval. The two divisions were re-united ; Macdonald was recalled, and the command of the right wing was given to St. Cyr ; Montrichard and Lapoype were disgraced : Perignon was appointed to the centre ; Lemoine, with twelve fresh battalions from France, was put at the head of the left ; and Joubert, a youthful hero of great natural abilities and indomitable valour, was created generalissimo.

The instructions for the conduct of the campaign, which Suwarrow had received from Vienna, chafed his impetuous spirit ; and upon receipt of an order from the emperor, prohibiting any enterprise against Switzerland, Genoa, or the maritime Alps, until the fortress of Mantua should be reduced, he exclaimed, " Thus it is that armies are ruined." The situation of this brave veteran was in the last degree discouraging. A Russian field-marshal, commanding in chief the united armies of Austria and Russia, was constantly kept in check by the antiquated military system of the Aulic council, and compelled to act, not upon the advantages of the occasion, by which he might more than once have brought the war to a conclusion, but upon old theories, of which his ardent temperament rendered him impa-

tient. Fretted by the repeated impediments which were thus thrown in his way, he despatched a train of artillery for the reduction of Mantua, confided to general Ott the pursuit of the army of Naples, and encamped on the Bormida with the fearless levies of the Volga, to await the slow issue of the sieges. To the jealousy of the cabinet of Vienna was alone to be attributed the plan of operations in Italy, which gave so much dissatisfaction to Suwarrow. They were desirous to get into their own hands the whole of the Italian conquests ; and now that the republican forces had been shattered by a series of defeats, and that nothing remained to secure the possession of Italy but the subjugation of the fortresses, they wished to relieve themselves from the presence of their formidable ally, whose interference on the shores of the Mediterranean, except under such an emergency as had originally called him there, was not regarded without some vague apprehensions both by Austria and England. The way in which these feelings were betrayed from time to time, soon brought about an explanation amongst the allied powers, which finally led to an agreement that the whole of the Russian troops, after the fall of Alexandria and Mantua, should be directed against Switzerland, under the command of Suwarrow ; while the Austrians should be left to prosecute the war in Italy, and the archduke should act on the Upper Rhine. To this end—the separation of the Russians and the Austrians—it was evident from the outset they were severally diverging. The secret projects of Paul, and the energetic movements of Suwarrow, which utterly discomposed the more placid and regular habits of the Austrian officers, had generated so much private disunion, that it would have been difficult to have held them together, with any prospect of advantage, much longer. But their projected dismemberment was, nevertheless, productive of the most calamitous consequences.

Faithful, however, to his orders, Suwarrow watched over the progress of the sieges, until Mantua and Alexandria were both taken by Kray and Bellegarde ; and

then, drawing his own forces round Coni, he commenced the siege of Tortona, and, after a short cannonade, took the castle of Serravalle, at the entrance of one of the Apennine valleys. At this crisis he received information of the approach of the republican army, under the command of Joubert, and made an immediate disposition of his troops to meet the enemy. The total strength of the French was 43,000 men, while that of the allies in front of Tortona was upwards of 55,000.

Moreau, superior to any petty sentiments of resentment at being superseded in his command by so young a general as Joubert, accompanied this powerful army, and, with a magnanimity worthy of his renown, afforded his successor the benefit of his experience. Concentrated on the plateau in the rear of Novi, the right wing of the army of Joubert rested on the Scrivia, the left at Basaluzzo, and the centre at Novi. This position, occupying a vast semicircle, which embraced the broken tracts, woods, and ravines at the foot of the Apennines, was so formidable as to give the French a decided advantage, although they were inferior in force to the allies, and made Joubert anxious to maintain the approaching contest in the rugged ground; while Suwarrow, on the other hand, was desirous to draw his opponents into the plain, where his numerical advantage would be more likely to decide the battle in his favour. The right of the allied army, under the command of Kray, who had just arrived crowned with victory from the towers of Mantua, occupied the plain close to the road leading from Novi to Boco; the left, consisting of the Austrian divisions of Lichtenstein and Froelich, under Melas, occupied Rivalto; and the centre, commanded by Derfelden, was stationed in the rear of Pozzolo-Formigaro. When Joubert had thus rashly advanced into the presence of so powerful a force, he believed that he would have to encounter merely the advance corps of the enemy, imagining that the remainder of the army was engaged at Mantua and elsewhere. Discovering, however, that he had miscalculated upon the disposition

of the allies, and that he was exposed to a force considerably greater than his own, he called a council of war to consider the expediency of endeavouring to effect a retreat into the fastnesses of the Apennines. But it was too late. The promptitude of Suwarrow did not admit of delay. Dressed in his usual costume, in his shirt down to his waist, that energetic soldier was seen on horseback, at the advanced posts, throughout the whole of the evening preceding the battle, minutely examining the position of the enemy—an indiscretion which led to a skirmish of the advanced posts—and early on the morrow, the opening of the attack by the allies left Joubert no alternative but to accept battle on the ground he had taken up. The order of attack given by Suwarrow on this occasion was singularly characteristic of that eccentric hero. “Kray and Bellegarde,” he said, “will attack the left, the Russians the centre, Melas the right.” This was the whole instruction he delivered to the troops.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 15th of August, Kray commenced the attack. The French, entangled in the vineyards, were taken by surprise, and unable either to deploy or to act on the offensive. A variety of skirmishes at different points alternately changed the success from side to side; but, although the French exhibited the utmost bravery, the imperialists rapidly gained upon them; their columns were already ascending the summit of the plateau, and Joubert, reckless of personal danger, and animated by the ardour of the moment, rushed forward to excite the troops, when he received a ball in his breast, while he was in the act of waving his hat, and exclaiming, “Forward, grenadiers! let us throw ourselves upon the tirailleurs!” The wound was mortal; he fell to the earth, uttering with his last breath, “Advance, my friends, advance!” The French, in the fervour of their devotion, closed round the body of their expiring hero, but, overcome by the tumultuous pressure of the enemy, were compelled to retire, and fought retreating to the heights.

The disorder that ensued in the ranks of the republicans almost amounted to a panic ; and if the distribution of the allied forces had been such as to have enabled them to profit by this calamity, the battle must have been speedily decided. But, as yet, the action was only partial : the Russians in the centre, and Melas, who commanded the reserve, were waiting for orders ; the right wing of the French had not been attacked ; and the want of means at the moment, on the part of Kray's division, to follow up the success of the first charge, gave the enemy time to rally, and afforded Moreau, who came up opportunely as Joubert fell, a sufficient interval to arrange the troops, and take the command. Having thus repaired the misfortunes that threw them into temporary confusion, they renewed the contest with irresistible bravery, and drove the Austrians down the hill, forcing them back upon their second line. Kray, upon whom the whole weight of the engagement thus far had fallen, now pressed Bagrathion, who commanded the Russians, to advance, as, unless speedily supported, he felt that retreat was inevitable. The Russian general hesitated at first, the hour not having arrived at which he was instructed to put his men into motion ; but, seeing the danger that impended over Kray, he waived his scruples, and advanced to the charge with a gallantry that deserved a happier fate than that which befel him. The carnage that ensued amongst the Russians was tremendous. The grape-shot of the flying artillery, and masked batteries, and the destructive discharge of the musquetry of the French, swept down whole companies of those fearless soldiers. As fast as these ranks were destroyed, they were replaced by fresh battalions, who were sacrificed in the same way by the steady and effective fire of the French. Yet those courageous troops, closing their ranks as rapidly as they were thinned, still pressed onwards, to the cry of *perod ! perod* !* and *ničboss ! ničboss † !* and

* Forward ! forward !

† Never fear ! never fear ! — war-cries of the Russians in battle.

with bayonets charged, advanced in a spirit of invincible obstinacy to receive their deaths by the side of their expiring comrades. The conduct of the Russians on this, as well as on every other occasion throughout the war, abundantly justified the saying of Frederic, that "it was less difficult to kill them than to conquer them." This attempt to force the French posts, so disastrous in its results, was an utter failure, and the remnant of the Russians were driven back to Pozzolo-Formigaro.

It was now noon, and the French lines had not yet been broken. Suwarrow, convinced of the impossibility of effecting the movement he had originally contemplated, that of turning the flanks of the enemy by separate divisions of his army, now resolved to concentrate his forces for a general and decisive attack. But such was the firm array and masterly organisation of the French, and so terrible was the fire of the infantry and the batteries, that the most vigorous efforts failed to make any impression upon them. Kray returned ten times to the charge, and was each time beaten back with great loss. A pause occurred in the midst of the slaughter, but it was only that the battle might be resumed with the greater fury. For four hours this frightful havoc continued, and, at last, both sides lapsed gradually into a short suspension of hostilities, utterly paralysed by fatigue. In this brief interval, while the field was covered with dead bodies, the reflections of the contending hosts might have possibly produced a cessation of the struggle, to enable them to perform the necessary obsequies over the slain; but the arrival of Melas at this critical juncture, with the left wing of the allied army, determined Suwarrow to return to the assault, and decide the fortune of the day. The original plan of attack was now resumed. Melas fell upon the right wing of the republicans, while Kray, whose physical energy appeared to be incapable of exhaustion, again assailed the left. Suwarrow himself, at the head of the main body, descended like a torrent upon the centre. At length the centre of the French gave way, and the

scattered troops, dismayed by the undaunted bravery of their opponents, fled behind the old walls and crumbling towers of Novi, from the heights of which they poured down a devastating fire upon the pursuers. Melas, by an admirable distribution of his strength, effected a complete movement upon the right wing, which, falling into confusion, cut its way with difficulty to the road in the rear of the French position. At this point, Lichtenstein, at the head of the imperial cavalry and the brigade of grenadiers, swept round the republicans who were now encompassed on every side; and Moreau, who saw that the day was lost, prepared for an immediate retreat. But he was so completely surrounded, that it was impossible to conduct the retreat in good order. The troops were filled with despair; whichever way they turned the bayonets of their antagonists gleamed upon them; and in tumultuous terror, they fled in the wildest disorder across the broken grounds in their rear. In this condition, Grouchy, Perignon, and Colli, mangled by sabre wounds, and a whole brigade having been made prisoners, the wretched survivors succeeded in reaching Gavi, the allies being too much fatigued to press upon their retreat. This sanguinary engagement was attended by enormous losses at both sides. On the part of the allies it was estimated at 1,800 killed, 5,200 wounded, and 1,200 prisoners; while the French left 1,500 killed on the field of battle, 5,500 wounded, and 3,000 prisoners, independently of thirty-seven cannons, twenty-eight caissons, and four standards. Throughout the whole campaign, there were few such instances of individual enthusiasm and recklessness of life exhibited as in this single battle. To that heedless ardour Joubert sacrificed his life, and Suwarrow frequently risked his person in the heat of the conflict; Kray distinguished himself by the intrepidity with which, at the head of his division, he returned again and again to charge the all but invulnerable line of the enemy; Barathion and Melas led their troops to the fiery mouths of the batteries; and Grouchy, bearing a standard in his hand, rushed into the

thickest part of the fight, and when it was torn from him, he raised his helmet on his sabre, until, wounded in the *melée*, he was borne down by overwhelming numbers.

The results of this battle were not proportionate to its cost. Moreau, regaining the defiles of the Apennines, succeeded in dispersing his troops through the mountains, in nearly the same positions they had previously held; while Suwarrow, who had received orders to concentrate the whole of the Russians in the Alps, set out, agreeably to the plan fixed upon by the allies, for the canton of the Tessino with an army of 17,000 men. Thus closed the campaign of the Russians in Italy — a campaign signalised by that extraordinary resignation to death for which the Russians have since become celebrated, and which, even more than their valour, rendered them so formidable to their opponents. The field was left open to the Austrians, who reaped the harvest of victory which Suwarrow had prepared to their hands. But, if the ambition of that active and able commander was defrauded of its proper rewards on the scene of his most memorable glories, he was in some measure compensated for the disappointment by the honours that were paid to his name at home. He was almost elevated to a place amongst the saints by his capricious master, who, intoxicated by his triumphs, conferred upon him the title of prince, with the surname of Italynski, and issued an ukase, by which he ordained that Suwarrow should be considered as the greatest general of ancient or modern times. He already held the title of Rimniksky, in reference to a victory he achieved over the Turks near the river Rimnik; so that nothing was left undone which Paul could compass to surround the veteran with the ceremonials of distinction. To Russia it was of importance to make this her first essay in the great European war, appear to the world in its most imposing shape; and certainly she was largely indebted to the skill as well as to the courage of her renowned general for the triumphs achieved by her arms. Previously

to the Italian campaign the Russians were regarded as undisciplined savages, who were completely ignorant of the art of war, and who were indebted for their victories to their fierceness and physical strength, rather than to their power of combination and knowledge of the use of arms. This misapprehension of their qualities operated both advantageously and disadvantageously. It spread at first a species of terror amongst the French, who were led to expect an array of monsters, ogres, or giants, wielding strange and unaccustomed weapons, and enacting superhuman wonders on the field; but it had the ultimate effect, when the preposterous and indefinite notion of their powers was dispelled by actual collision, of inducing the French to treat them with contempt because they found them nothing more than a race of hardy and obstinate soldiers. Thus, a French soldier, marching to the first rencontre with them, is said to have exclaimed, "We shall see whether they have four arms;" and, upon his return, to have duly observed, "Well! they have but two, and know not how to make use of them."

There is no doubt that the brilliant tactics of Suwarrow in Italy, his perseverance, celerity, and forethought, drew the Russians more rapidly into the theatre of European warfare than the mere temptation of their position could have done. Had Suwarrow failed, it is probable that, instead of pressing with such force upon the south, they would have retired to their own inclement regions, and concentrated their operations towards the east. But so completely did his successes engross the public mind, and inflame the vanity of the empire, that it was confidently anticipated he would in a few weeks make a triumphant entry into Paris, as he had previously done at Warsaw: nor were there wanting sagacious people to predict that the Russians and Tartars would once more make the conquest of the entire of Europe. What might have befallen, had Suwarrow been permitted to prosecute the war upon the point

which he had already shaken, it is difficult to calculate; but the jealousy of Austria prevented that consummation of his plans, and consigned him to another quarter, where an enemy, more formidable than any he had yet encountered, awaited his approach.

CHAP. VII.

MARCH OF ANOTHER RUSSIAN ARMY INTO SWITZERLAND UNDER THE COMMAND OF KORSAKOW. — THEY JOIN THE ARCHDUKE CHARLES AT ODER. — ENDINGEN. — ARROGANCE OF KORSAKOW. — THE ARCHDUKE DEPARTS FOR THE UPPER RHINE. — RELATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE FRENCH AND RUSSIANS. — SUWARROW CONCERTS A JUNCTION WITH KORSAKOW. — RAPID MOVEMENT OF MASSENA TO COUNTERACT IT. — DESPERATE RESISTANCE OF THE RUSSIANS. — ZURICH IS SURROUNDED BY THE FRENCH, AND TAKEN AFTER AN OBSTINATE CONFLICT. — KORSAKOW CUTS HIS WAY THROUGH THE ENEMY. — TOTAL DISPERSION OF THE SECOND RUSSIAN ARMY. — VICTORIOUS ADVANCE OF SUWARROW UPON ST. GOTHARD. — HIS PROGRESS IS SUDDENLY ARRESTED. — MELANCHOLY SITUATION OF THE ARMY. — SUWARROW RETREATS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE. — INCREDIBLE SUFFERINGS OF THE TROOPS IN THE PASSAGE OF THE ALPS. — THEY RE-UNITE IN THE VALLEY OF THE RHINE. — DEATH OF SUWARROW. — EXPEDITION AGAINST HOLLAND. — ITS FAILURE AND RESULTS. — PAUL INTERCEDES WITH NAPOLEON FOR THE QUEEN OF NAPLES. — HE BREAKS WITH ENGLAND, AND LABOURS TO ESTABLISH A MARITIME COALITION. — THE ENGLISH FLEET PASSES THE SOUND. — INVASION OF INDIA CONTEMPLATED BY PAUL AND NAPOLEON. — FLAGRANT DESPOTISM OF PAUL. — A CONSPIRACY TO DETHRONE HIM IS ORGANISED AT ST. PETERSBURGH. — HIS ASSASSINATION. — CHARACTER OF PAUL.

THE emperor Paul had declared, in one of his im- 1799.
petuous manifestoes, that he had resolved, he and his allies, to destroy the impious government that ruled in France; and certainly, looking at the formidable coalition that was at this period preparing to pour down on that country, it would seem that this resolution was not unlikely to be finally carried into complete effect. While Austria was accomplishing the conquest of Italy, and Suwarrow was marching upon the Alps, a fresh Russian armament was in motion upon the banks of the Rhine. This new army was upwards of 40,000 strong,

and consisted of the flower of the Russian troops. It was composed chiefly of those famous battalions of grenadiers which Potemkin had formed, and which had won imperishable laurels at Otschakow and Ismael; and partly of the army that had been recalled from Persia. If the routes which some of these troops had traversed, in order to join the main body, were to be traced from the mouths of the Neva and the Dwina, thence to the banks of the Arakis, and thence to the Rhine,—from Moscow, perhaps, or Archangel, to the frontier provinces of Persia, thence to Novi, thence to Lisle in Flanders, and on to Cologne, the extraordinary efforts of Russia on this occasion, would appear even more surprising than they would seem even from the details of her military operations.

The caprices of the emperor were probably never more remarkably exhibited, than in the vacillation he betrayed concerning the command of this force. Its leader was changed four times before it reached its destination. The victories of Suwarrow seemed to have made him afraid of risking the credit of the empire by entrusting the new expedition to a less experienced commander; and to these misgivings must be attributed the indecision he displayed upon this point. The army had assembled under the orders of prince Galitzin, an excellent officer, who had served in Courland and Lithuania during the Polish war; but Paul, distrustful of his skill as a disciplinarian, superseded him, and appointed general Hermann in his stead. But this nomination pleased him no better than the former; and Hermann was displaced by count Schembach, a Pole; who, in turn, gave way to Rimsky-Korsakow, who was finally left in the undisturbed command. This appointment was the strangest of them all.

Korsakow had distinguished himself, as major of a regiment of guards, by the excellent order of his men, and the precision of their evolutions. He had been appointed by the empress Catherine to accompany the count d'Artois to England; and, passing through Flanders

on his return, he had witnessed the campaign of 1794, of which he gave a full report to the empress, representing both the Austrians and the French as being such undisciplined soldiers, that they could not maintain their ground before a Russian army. These statements procured him the favour of the empress, who sent him to Persia, to act under the inexperienced Zubof. Upon the accession of Paul, Korsakow, like many others who had served in that ill-fated army, was recalled and disgraced; but the ductile officer soon found a way to regain the good opinion of the frivolous emperor. He affected an intense admiration of the changes which Paul introduced into the discipline of the army; and, by calumniating the French soldiers, who, he said, did not know how to keep themselves upright, nor to march, nor to form squares, nor to manœuvre in oblique lines, &c., he at length completely gained upon the emperor's confidence. There was but one way to Paul's friendship—approbation of his military exercises; but the favourite who succeeded by this way had, after all, only a very uncertain tenure of the royal protection. Paul's new military system, if it might be so called, consisted of such an immense variety of unimportant details, that the general who desired to master it was compelled to adapt himself perpetually to fresh caprices. Hence he was as likely, in a little time, to lose the patronage of the emperor by some unintentional neglect, as he was sure to gain it in the first instance by a show of zeal. The military system of Paul must not be confounded with that of Frederick the Great, or of marshal Saxe, or that which was proposed by Griebert; it was wholly made up of a minute pedantry in regulations for the handling of arms, for the position of the fingers, the curve of the body on parade, the number of buttons on the coat and gaiters, the shape of the hat, the colour of the cockade, and such insignificant matters. These were the points that absorbed his attention; while more serious considerations—the tactics and evolutions of the troops—were left in a great measure to the genius of the commander,

who usually acted on the impulse of the occasion, without being much indebted to any previous method or rules of art. It was on this account, that Frederick the Great regarded the Russian general, Butterlin, as one of the most dangerous of his enemies. "One cannot," he said, "make any plan of defence against that man; he always acts in a manner directly contrary to every rational supposition." Perhaps, observes a contemporary writer, Butterlin might have reasoned in reply, that if he had attacked that great master according to the rules with which he was so well acquainted, he should have been beaten; and that, therefore, he incurred less risk by infringing them all.* Even Suwarrow frequently reversed the usual modes of proceeding; choosing the most difficult routes, assailing the strongest points, and abandoning the happiest position, for movements which other generals would not have adopted except in cases of extreme necessity.

The instructions which were given to Korsakow, were to act in concert with the archduke Charles, then in Switzerland, for the general plan of the campaign, but to maintain the Russian army separately, so that the fame of its exploits should not be confounded with that of the Austrians, as it had been in Italy. The campaign had already been opened in Germany and Switzerland, before the arrival of the Russians, who were anxiously expected by the archduke. The French army, under the able command of Massena, who was intimately acquainted with the difficult mountain line of the Linmat, where he had taken up a powerful position, had already forced the imperialists at all their points; but in order to accomplish these successes, he was obliged to concentrate his forces on the right wing, thus weakening his left, which, lower down on the plain, guarded the course of the Aar, the river that joins the Limmat, at Bruick, foaming down to that point from the lake of Zurich, where the archduke had gathered the main body of his troops. Against that weakened

* *Memoires Secretes*, &c.

extremity, the archduke now resolved to direct his whole strength, in which resolution he was confirmed by the arrival at Schaffhausen of 20,000 Russians of the corps of Korsakow, and a promise that Korsakow would arrive at Oder-Endingen, in the centre of the line, with 23,000. With this purpose in view, 30,000 men were rapidly assembled on the banks of the river, and Gross Dettingen was selected as the point for attempting the passage: while general Hotze, with 8,000 men, was left in Zurich, under rigid injunctions to defend that post to the last extremity. So adroitly masked was the march of the columns, that the whole force reached the destined point before the enemy were aware of their approach; but this skilful movement was completely defeated by the negligence of the Austrian engineers, who had failed to provide themselves with the necessary grappling-irons to secure the pontoons in the rocky bed of the stream, and an enterprise which, had it proved successful, would have thrown open to the allies the defenceless frontier of the Jura, and perhaps have altered the fate of the campaign, was precipitately abandoned. The archduke returned to Zurich, where he resumed his former position; but the arrogance of the Russian commander, who early betrayed his indisposition to act in common with the Austrians, as well as his contempt for the French, determined the archduke to leave the field open to his new allies. He, therefore, drew off the great body of his troops for the Upper Rhine, leaving the united force of Korsakow and Hotze, amounting to 56,000 men, to occupy a line forty miles in length, against which Massena could bring a force of 56,000 to bear upon the central point—the walls of Zurich.*

* The presumption of Korsakow, in his manner of speaking of the French carried him to such lengths, that he frequently indulged in similar sarcasms against the Austrians. On one occasion, in a conference with the archduke, before that able officer departed for the Rhine, the duke had pointed out to him the positions which it was essential to guard. "Here," he observed, "you ought to place a battalion." "A company you mean," replied Korsakow. "No," said the archduke, "a battalion." "I understand you," was the arrogant reply of Korsakow, "*an Austrian battalion, or a Russian company.*"

In this campaign, the Russians were upon new and unaccustomed ground: and, notwithstanding the exulting and overbearing spirit they exhibited, it could not be concealed that the obstacles against which they had to contend, were greater than any they had yet encountered. Their power principally consisted in their expertness in carrying posts in an intersected country at the point of the bayonet,—a mode of warfare for which their impetuosity and fearlessness eminently qualified them; but in pitched battles on the open plains, where the superiority of the French artillery and cavalry was manifest over their infantry, which constituted the strength and glory of their army, or in the regular sieges of such strong fortresses as bristled along the ridges of this mountain frontier, for the conduct of which they did not possess the necessary trains, they were placed at a considerable disadvantage before such experienced troops as those which they had now to combat. But their reliance on this occasion lay in a great measure upon the Swiss themselves, who, indignant at the ambitious despotism of France, and wearied of seeing their country converted into a camp for the wars of foreign armies, and their peaceful valleys turned into graves for the slain in those sanguinary onslaugths, had declared in great numbers for the allies. The French in vain attempted to raise a body of troops in the Alpine republics; they could not even complete the third of a legion of 18,000 men to serve under their banners, although they possessed all the strong holds of the Helvetic cantons.

The French and the Russians now gazed upon each other from the opposite banks of the Limmat; and the curiosity and wonder which the latter excited in the minds of the former, may be estimated from the notes taken on the spot by a French general, who served in this memorable campaign. "I have seen," he observes, "on the right bank of the Limmat, while our army kept the left, posts of Cossacks squatted together in the most grotesque manner; they were seen to eat

raw the aliments which are very carefully dressed in all civilised countries, such as meat, pumpkins, cucumbers, &c. The French music came occasionally, and played warlike airs on the banks, not long since so happy, of this beautiful Limmat. At such times, these Cossacks would rise spontaneously to dance in a ring, while the sentinel that they had in front stood leaning on his lance, motionless as a statue. On seeing for the first time these strange soldiers, I recalled to mind the travels and the Hottentots of Le Vaillant, or of Abyssinian Bruce. These troops are ill-attended to, badly clothed, and appear more despicable than they really are. There is a marked difference between the Cossacks and regular regiments; and it is difficult to be conceived, on seeing them in the same camp, that they were calculated for understanding each other, and serving together. But there exists a difference still more striking between one officer and another of the same regiment. As much education, elegance, and politeness, as you will perceive in a certain class of Russian officers, so much will you be surprised at the contrary in another class. Those of the latter are distinguished from the simple Cossack only by the distinctive mark of their rank." In these notes, the writer evidently under-rated the military qualifications of the uncivilised Cossacks, whom he seems to have regarded more with the eye of an artist than a soldier; but his remarks serve to show the opinions of the French concerning their uncouth adversaries. Their position, and the hopes by which they were severally animated at this moment, cannot be contemplated without feelings of the deepest interest. The Russians, for nearly a century past, had been accustomed to success. Alternately triumphant in the north and the east, they now found themselves encamped in the south, elated with a blind confidence, that here also their progress must be a succession of victories, an anticipation which was doubly strengthened by their religious fanaticism, and their hatred of republican France. The French, on the other hand, were excited by the

proud recollections of those splendid acquisitions which they had won during the war, of their grand domestic assertion of popular theories over the monarchical principle, and, above all, by the wonderful resistance they had maintained against a formidable union of powers, each of which was singly an antagonist more than equal to themselves in territorial strength and fiscal resources. That the course of their bold campaigns was darkened by occasional disasters, and sometimes even clouded by the darkest reverses of fortune, had no other effect than to render them more circumspect, to give them a more combined system of action, and to draw into play more vividly that energetic spirit of personal courage and national honour which, on their side, counterbalanced the ferocity and recklessness of their opponents. They possessed besides this signal advantage, that they were headed by a celebrated general, the companion in arms of Buonaparte, upon whose crest victory had frequently alighted; while the Russians were commanded by an officer who had never distinguished himself in the field, and who was known even to his own troops only by his punctuality upon parade.

Suwarrow, who was now advancing rapidly from the plains of Piedmont, concerted a plan with Korsakow and Hotze, by which he proposed to effect a junction with them at Zurich, after having assailed the republican posts near Airolo, on the Tessino, and made himself master of the heights of St. Gothard. This daring enterprise, which presented almost insurmountable difficulties, in consequence of the rugged nature of the country through which it was necessary to penetrate, was recommended to Suwarrow, whose impetuous character would not allow him to calculate upon obstacles, by the important results that must have followed, could he succeed in throwing himself upon the enemy's flank, through the appalling gorges of St. Gothard. But Massena, whose force in the field was superior to that of the allies, without Suwarrow, was resolved to anti-

cipate the approach of that great commander, and to strike a decisive blow before the junction could be effected. His plan was to make a feint upon Zurich, then by crossing further down the river to attack Korsakow at the same moment in front and rear. By this movement, the garrison at Zurich, which was only 25,000 strong, and which was crowded into a space too narrow to admit of any extended operations, would be effectually cut off from its right wing down the river, while it was already separated from its left by the lake. This able design was crowned with the most brilliant success.

On the evening of the 24th September, the French engineers collected their pontoons and barks behind the eminences and trees on the banks of the river, and at daybreak they commenced the passage under cover of their masked batteries, which played with decided effect upon the opposite side, where the Russians were drawn up as firm as a rampart, on the edge of the stream. But such was the rapidity with which the French passed over, that those brave battalions, after a formidable resistance, were at length forced to abandon their ground; but they immediately rallied in an intermediate position, and for a long time they checked the ardour of their assailants. This post, however, like the first, was finally forced, when they rallied again behind their tents; and then, when their ammunition was exhausted, resolved not to surrender, they fought with desperation to the last man, and died in rank and file.*

By this gallant achievement, 15,000 Frenchmen, under the command of general Oudinot, were firmly established on the right bank of the river. In the mean while, a feigned attack on the left created a diversion of the Russian forces on the lower Limmat, while a vigorous demonstration against Zurich drew the bulk of

* This fact is attested on the authority of the French general officer, whose opinion of the Cossacks we have just quoted. He could not suppress the admiration which the undaunted energy of the Russians, on this remarkable occasion, excited in his mind.

the Russian centre to that point. The advance of Oudinot, who carried Hurg, and the heights on the north-west of Zurich, now quickly developed to Korsakow the imminent peril in which he was placed both in rear and front; and towards evening he made a desperate sally at the head of 5,000 men, which, however, was not followed by any other consequence than that of making the enemy recede to the foot of the heights, on the south side of the city. His situation was now become hopeless. The only avenue of retreat to Germany was closed up by the French, and the allied troops, surrounded on almost every side, were thrown into the utmost confusion within the walls of Zurich. As night approached, the numerous watchfires on the adjacent hills discovered to the besieged the increasing lines of the enemy drawing closer every moment around them, while the bombs, falling fast in the crowded streets, choked up with waggons and horsemen, the dead and the dying, with the cavalry trampling over the bodies of the wounded, in their despairing efforts to force their way outwards in the vain chance of making head against the enemy, whose victorious shouts were ringing in their ears, formed altogether a scene of horror, such as was not witnessed before throughout the whole of this devastating war. Massena, who was now shaking the ramparts with the thunders of his cannon, summoned the garrison to surrender; but Korsakow was too proud, or perhaps, too obstinate, to transmit an answer to the proposal; and in this state the night was passed, the French preparing for the final assault on the following morning, and the Russians occupied in arrangements for a last and terrible effort.

The bravery which the Russians displayed during the day extorted from their opponents many expressions of sympathy and wonder. They defended their posts against the most fearful odds, and, even when all prospect of turning the tide of victory was at an end, with so much stubborn resolution, preferring death to flight or capitulation, that the French frequently recoiled from the car-

nage which the obstinacy of those valiant battalions rendered inevitable. Such extraordinary perseverance, under circumstances that did not admit a gleam of hope, would appear to justify the character of fanaticism which some of the historians of this war have ascribed to the Russians. There is no doubt that the bulk of the Russian people, and especially those who serve in the army, are the slaves of a strange superstition, which, in the hour of danger, arms them with an inflexible resolution, akin to the spirit of martyrdom in every thing but its enthusiasm. The Russian does not fall with the exulting ecstasy of the martyr, but with a cold and stern resignation that would resemble the philosophic obduracy of the ancient Romans, but that it is wanting in that grand elevation of soul which appeared to invest death with the dignity of a triumph. The Russian soldiers believe in a particular god—a Russian god—whom they constantly invoke, not as the God of the universe, but as their own god. This was Suwarrow's belief; and he availed himself of it to work more effectually upon the stolid prejudices of his troops. Independently of this irrational motive for undertaking the most forlorn enterprises, confident that death, in such exigencies, is an immediate passport to happiness, the Russian gunners and bombardiers, upon entering the artillery, take an oath to the colours of their regiment, and the piece that is entrusted to them, swearing not to abandon it, but to sprinkle it with the last drop of their blood. In the battle of Zurich this frantic pledge was kept with revolting fidelity; the bombardiers standing at their posts, after the rest of the columns had fled, and submitting to be killed round their gun-carriages. Facts of this description place the Russians in a very different light from any other troops that were engaged in the campaign; and will, to a great extent, account for the terror which they inspired wherever they appeared.

Resolved not to surrender, Korsakow determined upon forcing a passage through the French troops on the following morning, on the road to Winthenthur, the sole

line of retreat that remained to him. This resolution was fortified by the arrival, during the night, of two strong battalions, detached under Holtze, and of the whole of the right wing under Durassow, which had been detained by the feigned attack of Menard, but, on learning the real state of affairs in Zurich, had, by a long circuit, evaded the French outposts, and succeeded in reaching head-quarters. At daybreak the Russian columns formed into order of battle, and descended with impetuosity upon the French division established on the German road. The resistance was spirited, and the loss of life considerable on both sides; but at length the Russians succeeded in cutting a passage before them, and then made arrangements for a retreat, leaving only a small rear-guard to defend the ramparts, until the immense mass should have passed out of the city. The close and impenetrable ranks of the Russians, which, as usual, were as rapidly closed as they were thinned, reloading by platoons and divisions, and advancing with mechanical regularity, made the French retire as they went forward; but the sharpshooters, adopting the plan of alternately discharging and retreating, and the flying artillery coming up at a gallop in the intervals of the Russian fire, pouring showers of grape-shot against the solid square, and then returning to reload in a safe position, and reappearing again to assail in the same way this moving bastion, bristling with idle bayonets, committed enormous havoc on every side of the Russian battalions. By these reiterated charges, the French at last succeeded in throwing the whole body into confusion: the consternation rapidly spread from the front to the rear; and, in the disorder that ensued, 100 pieces of cannon, all the ammunition wagons and baggage, and the military chest, containing 60,000 Dutch ducats in specie, and 300,000 florins in silver, which Korsakow, with singular indiscretion, had placed in the rear, although, in the heat of the conflict, he was entreated for orders to put the treasure of the army in a place of safety, fell into the hands of the republicans. The contest was now virtually de-

cided. The French, pursuing their triumph, rushed into the town; a desperate conflict took place in the streets, and the narrow passages leading to the ramparts, in the course of which the benevolent Lavater*, endeavouring to interpose between a soldier and his victim, lost his life; and, finally, the few remaining troops in the garrison laid down their arms. The carnage would, probably, not have ceased until the whole Russian army had been exterminated, if Massena had not been in possession of information which induced him to make another disposition of his troops, instead of following Korsakow, who, with the loss of 8000 killed and wounded, and 5000 prisoners, besides all his baggage and ammunition, was permitted to effect his retreat. The conduct of the French in the town of Zurich was disgraceful to the character of a civilised nation. Not satisfied with that waste of life which too often follows close upon victory, and which sometimes cannot be prevented in the heat and confusion of the last hour of a siege, they carried into their revels a spirit of debauchery which even their own annalists have been compelled to censure.

This was the first defeat that befel the Russians in the war. It was overwhelming and complete. That it was to be attributed materially, if not wholly, to the incertitude and inexperience of Korsakow can hardly be doubted: and, if any circumstances could have convinced the emperor that adherence to small points of exercise was not the highest quality of a general, the conduct of his chosen officer on this occasion ought to have been conclusive. Unaccustomed to the skilful manœuvres of such an army as he had to encounter, and which he rashly affected to despise, Korsakow utterly lost his presence of mind, and became evidently bewildered by the rapidity and multiplicity of the movements of the French army, which were as perplexing to him as they were novel and unexpected. The panic which his irresolution produced was increased by the want of mature counsellors around him: he had scarcely any other generals under his orders

* Lavater was shot by a soldier serving on the French side.

than young officers, who had scarcely seen any service, and whose bravery afforded but a poor compensation for their want of skill. The only one amongst them who possessed any claim to distinction, and who was destined to earn an honourable reputation in a more glorious war, was general Sacken, a man of experience, an excellent officer, and a strict disciplinarian. He and general Markow were taken prisoners. Korsakow's lieutenant was the prince Gortschakow, a nephew of the veteran Suwarrow. This young man, to whom so responsible a post was confided, did not possess a single qualification for command. He plumed himself upon having followed his uncle through a few campaigns, and on having been sent as a courier to the empress on two or three occasions, receiving, according to usage, a step of promotion, or the riband of an order, on each journey. These orders, glittering upon his breast, gave him an air of ineffable conceit, which harmonised with the feeble character of his nature. He wore rouge, and whalebone stays to give him a shape, and looked on the field of battle as if he were studying the graces of his attitudes instead of the movements of the enemy. Of such incapable persons was the staff of Korsakow formed ; so that, taking also into consideration his own unfitness for the onerous duties he ventured to assume, it is hardly surprising that the Russian army should have suffered so ingloriously under his hands.

The disastrous issue of the battle of Zurich was followed by the complete rout of the right wing, which was encamped under Holtze, higher up on the Linth. Marshal Soult crossed the river at three o'clock in the morning ; and, taking the Austrians by surprise, pursued them from post to post, until, at last, he drove them beyond the Rhine. Upon this occasion, general Holtze was killed, 3000 Austrians were taken prisoners, and twenty pieces of cannon, and the whole baggage of the division, fell into the hands of the French.

While these misfortunes were falling upon the allies at Zurich, Suwarrow was energetically fulfilling his

part of the general plan of the campaign. Pursuing his march at the head of 12,000, having despatched Rosamberg with 6,000 more to attempt the summit of the Crispalt, he prepared to assail the precipitous ascent of St. Gothard, covered by platoons of musketry. The French sharpshooters, posted in detached parties behind jutting rocks and scattered trees, poured down a murderous fire upon the assailants, whose heroic perseverance at last gave way before impediments that appeared to be insurmountable. The zigzag paths of the mountain, under any circumstances, would have been difficult to scale ; but, thus protected by heavy showers of balls, the Russians believed them to be inaccessible ; and, already exhausted by privation and fatigue, they began to murmur, and, at length, refused to advance any farther. Then it was that the extraordinary influence which Suwarrow exercised over his troops was employed with almost miraculous effect. He caused a grave to be dug in the road at the foot of the ascent ; and, throwing himself into it, he exclaimed, " Cover me with earth, and here leave your general. You are no longer my children : I am no longer your father. I have nothing more to do than die ! " The grenadiers, deeply affected by the scene, crowded around him ; and, with loud cries, entreated to be led up the mountain.* Suwarrow instantly put himself at their head ; and, rushing up the path, drove the French from their posts, and pursued them, at the point of the bayonet, across the summit of St. Gothard. Rosamberg at the same time had reached the Crispalt ; and, after destroying a great part of the enemy's battalions, had driven the remainder into the valley, where another detachment was despatched to cut off their retreat. In these desperate circumstances, the French generals, Lecombe and Gudín, had no alternative but flight, although the means were almost as dangerous

* Some of the Russian officers who accompanied Suwarrow on this expedition have denied the truth of this anecdote. They stated that it was not true, because the Russian army was never discouraged in following Suwarrow, and had never murmured under his orders. But the fact is too well attested by other authorities to admit of dispute.

as an attempt to resist their intrepid antagonists. Lecombe, forced from his tents on the Crispalt, threw his artillery into the Reuss, and, retiring down the valley of Schollonen, destroyed the Devil's Bridge to impede the progress of the pursuers ; while Gudin, dispossessed of the summit of the St. Gothard, scaled the diagonal path of the Furca by moonlight, and succeeded in effecting his retreat to the higher elevation of the dreary Grimsel. Abandoning Gudin to the snows of that frozen peak, the Russian columns reunited, and descended to pursue Lecombe. They were stopped by an impassable gulf, two hundred feet in depth, at the pass of the Devil's Bridge. An awful chasm separated the two hosts ; and an effective fire from the opposite side swept off all the Russians who ventured to approach the edge of the abyss. In this extremity, the terrific passage of the yawning Unnerloch was pierced by the Russians, driving the soldiers in front headlong over the rocks, until the hills on the left were scaled. The post at the bridge was now rapidly broken up ; and, following up this surprising feat with celerity, beams were quickly thrown across the defile ; and the Russian troops, passing over in tumultuous crowds, the French were finally dispersed, and driven beyond Altdorf. Here the progress of Suwarrow was arrested by the lake of Lucerne ; and the only outlet that was open to him to join the allied troops lay through the horrible defile of the Shachenthal. It was on this memorable spot, the cradle of Helvetian liberty, that Suwarrow received intelligence of the defeat of Korsakow, and the death of Holtze. The indignation and fury of the veteran were unbounded ; and, despatching a messenger to Korsakow, he charged him to march forward, informing him that the army of Suwarrow had arrived, and already beaten the French, and that he would hold him responsible with his head for any retrograde movement he might henceforward make. But the sun of Suwarrow's glory was set for ever. Korsakow, alarmed at the menaces of the general-in-chief, re-organised his dishevelled forces, and,

turning fiercely upon his pursuers, gave them battle near Constance. In this engagement, the last between the Russians and the French, the Russian cavalry exhibited a despairing courage that was worthy of a better destiny. Three times they charged a dense body, consisting of two demi-brigades of infantry, and three times, broken in the onslaught, they rallied under a destructive fire of grape-shot and musketry. At the same time the town of Constance suffered all the horrors of a siege ; the unfortunate inhabitants being compelled to barricade the streets, which were alternately taken possession of by both parties. For Suwarrow, in the meanwhile, nothing remained but to attempt the most perilous march that had ever been imposed upon a military force. Compelled to abandon their artillery and baggage, the troops advanced in single file upon the precipitous and rocky path, numbers of them sinking from fatigue, or losing their footing on the slippery ridges, and falling into the ravines below. In this way, struggling forward slowly, the straggling columns reached Mitten, which was entered by the leading file before the last had cleared Altdorf. At this point Suwarrow expected to be reinforced by the imperialists ; but the disasters that had befallen them deprived him of all hopes of succour from that quarter ; and he now found himself in the heart of the Muttenthal, surrounded on all sides by the French, who were rapidly drawing their lines around him, and enclosing him within a circle from which escape seemed impossible. But this extremity, fearful as it was, did not subdue the gallant spirit of the old warrior. He immediately assembled his troops ; and, calling a council of war, proposed at once to force his way towards Schwytz, in the rear of the French position. His officers, however, pointed out the imminent danger of such a step, and suggested the more prudent course of a retreat into the Glarus and the Grisons. Suwarrow, at last, allowed himself to be overruled ; and, for the first time in his life, gave an order for retreat. It is said that, upon this occasion, he wept

with intense emotion. He felt that his reputation for invincibility was irretrievably forfeited. When this resolution was taken, Suwarrow acted upon it with his usual vigour. Massena in vain endeavoured to draw him out of the defiles, in the hope of taking him prisoner, as well as the young duke Constantine, who accompanied him in this campaign. He retreated like a lion, keeping his enemies at bay; and they acknowledged that his retreating fires were a counterpart of his march.

Massena, unable to make an impression on the firm phalanx of the Russians, rapidly crossed the mountains into Glarus, and took post at Naefels, hoping there to block up their passage. The contest was renewed with redoubled vigour at this place; and the Russians, failing to force the post, turned upon a large body of the republicans that had assailed their rear-guard, and, by incredible efforts, completely routed them, killing 1000 men, and taking as many prisoners, and five pieces of cannon. It seemed that the retreat of Suwarrow was even more ferocious than his advance. After a brief repose at Glarus, the retreat over the rugged summits of the Alps was resumed. But the difficulties were greater than before. The paths were choked with snow; and, in these inhospitable solitudes, destitute of stores to sustain their strength, covering to shelter them from the inclemency of the wintry tempests, or trees to make fires to cheer their dreary bivouacs, the Russians persevered with a constancy which has never been equalled by any troops in any period of the world. They still pressed on—great numbers perishing by cold and famine—until they attained the summit of the ridge; and the prospect that was then presented to their eyes was still more disheartening than the horrors which they had already endured. On every side, mountains, covered to their pinnacles with snow, started up around them. The heavy clouds that floated over the peaks of the Tyrolese Alps revealed by glimpses, as they rolled off at intervals, the interminable extent of these mighty miracles of nature; and there

was not a single sign of life or vegetation, not a wreath of smoke, nor a trackway visible, to afford them a direction out of this hopeless situation. The descent was rendered impracticable by the accumulation of ice on the precipitous sides of the mountains ; and it was by a toil, which cannot be reflected in description, that the main body finally reached the village of Panix in the Grisons, where head-quarters were established ; the greater part of those intrepid soldiers sleeping uncovered at night in the snow. From this place they persevered in their heroic march, until, after sustaining tenfold greater hardships than awaited the Carthaginian conqueror in the outset of his career in the Pennine Alps, they gained the valley of the Rhine, when the scattered troops were ultimately reunited at Ilantz.*

Such was the conclusion of the part which Russia took in the war against France, and such was the fate of the fearless soldiers whom Suwarrow, in the pride of a captain who never suffered a defeat before, had led against an enemy he despised. Of 80,000 men, who originally composed that army, but few were left to relate the mournful history of their discomfiture ; and those few, exhausted by fatigue, half-clothed, and without baggage or artillery, presented a spectacle so humiliating, that the most glorious victories of the empire were obscured by their great disasters. Suwarrow had sworn to conquer France, and to enter Paris at the head of his triumphant hosts. But he could not even pass the barrier of the Alps ; and he returned to St. Petersburg with a broken heart. It afforded no consolation to him that, even throughout all these calamities, he had never been beaten. Even his brilliant campaign in Italy yielded him no satisfaction ; for he left the Austrians behind him, to reap, by a few easy conquests, the fame to which his arduous battles had opened the way. His character underwent a sudden and entire change. His rough humour, and that eccentricity which distinguished him from all his contem

* Alison's History of Europe.

poraries, gave way to a morose and sullen temper. He accused the Austrians, and even the archduke, of treachery, and visited Korsakow with unmeasured invectives. Misfortunes pressed upon him on every side. Not only was he deprived of the honour of the victories he had won, but the emperor ungratefully attributed to him a share in the disasters that followed in Switzerland; and completed the wrong by refusing to give him a fresh command, by which he might repair the disgraces of the past. This last act of injustice fell heavier upon his spirit than all the rest. When he reached St. Petersburg, he went to the house of one of his nephews, retired to bed, and never rose again. The grand dukes were allowed to visit him in his last moments; and the aged veteran—one of the most remarkable men of the age—expired in their arms. Suwarrow began his military career as a common soldier in the empress Elizabeth's guards; and he closed it as generalissimo of the armies of the empire, covered with orders, and followed to the grave by the devotion of the soldiery, and the admiration of his countrymen. Russia alone could have produced such a man; and his memory will always be cherished amongst her greatest historical recollections.

The conduct of Paul, towards the remnant of the army that yet lingered in the neighbourhood of the war, plainly betrayed the irritation and evil passions which the failure of the two expeditions against France had produced in his mind. When the first bursts of ungovernable fury had subsided, he determined to make a terrible example of the troops, and disgraced, in a sweeping order, all the officers, whether dead or alive, who were missing from the ranks of the army, including, of course, all those who had been taken prisoners by the French, amongst whom were some of the bravest men in the service. In addition to this gratuitous cruelty, he abandoned to their fate those soldiers who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, refusing to take any measures for effecting an exchange, or otherwise reducing the misery of their situation. The only con-

solation of which, amidst these bewildering gusts of temper, he seemed to be susceptible, was that which he derived from the stories related to him by the grand duke Constantine, and others, of the jealousy of the Austrians, by which the reverses of Russia were solely attributed to their treachery. These absurd and monstrous fabrications were credited in the gross by Paul; and his acquiescence in them, and the extravagant delusions into which they betrayed him, appear to have, in a great measure, justified the suspicions which, about this period, began to be entertained of his sanity. But the measure of provocation was not yet full.

While the battalions of Suwarrow and Korsakow were struggling against an adverse fortune in the Alps, England had concluded a treaty with Russia for an expedition against Holland. The reason why Holland was the quarter selected for attack, was because, of the countries in possession of the republicans, it lay the nearest to the shores of England, and because its means of defence were inconsiderable. By this treaty it was agreed that England should furnish 13,000 and Russia 17,000 men, and that England, in addition, should pay 44,000*l.* per month for the expenses of the Russian troops, and employ her whole naval force to support the operations. The proposed object of this expedition was to restore the stadtholder. The arrangements for this undertaking were vigorous and costly upon both sides; and the arsenals of the Baltic, and the harbours of Great Britain, rung with the exulting sounds of preparation. In July, sir Home Popham sailed for the Baltic to take on board the Russian contingent; and, in August, the first division of the English army, 12,000 strong, sailed from England to join lord Duncan in the North Sea. Towards the latter end of the month, the British, headed by sir Ralph Abercrombie, landed in Holland, took the fort of the Helder, and forced the Dutch fleet in the Texel to surrender. The Russians had not yet arrived; and the French commander, taking advantage of the interval, collected all his forces for a concentrated attack upon the English; but was repulsed

at all points, with a loss of 2000 men. It is remarkable that, up to this time, the English were successful in every movement they attempted — that they effected their landing in the face of a heavy fire with surprising rapidity — that they defeated the combined French and Dutch troops twice on shore — took the important fort of the Helder, which commanded the Texel — and seized the whole Dutch fleet, without striking a blow ; all of which they accomplished within a fortnight ; and that, from the moment when the Russians joined them under general Hermann, a number of reverses conspired against their progress, until they were eventually compelled to evacuate Holland, acquiring, by the enterprise, no other advantage than that of retaining possession of the Dutch fleet, which the duke of York, who commanded the English on that occasion, firmly refused to surrender. In the first battle that was fought after the junction of the English and Russians, the centre and left, composed of the English, had completely succeeded in driving back the French, Dundas taking all the villages that lay before him, and sir James Pulteney, not merely throwing the Dutch divisions into consternation, but taking 1000 prisoners. But, while these successes were crowning the efforts of the British, they were destined to be neutralised by the misfortunes of the Russians, who formed the right wing. After forcing the advanced guard of the enemy, and making themselves masters of Schorlдам and Bergen, the whole of general Hermann's lines fell into confusion : the French, rallying at this unexpected diversion in their favour, returned steadily to the charge ; and, assailing the Russians both in front and flank, hunted them, at the point of the bayonet, behind the allied entrenchments of Zyp, taking general Hermann prisoner, with twenty-six pieces of cannon and seven standards, and reducing the Russian force by 3500 killed and wounded. The news of the disastrous flight of the Russians had no sooner reached the duke of York than, drawing off his column from the pursuit of the enemy in the centre, he directed them towards the quarter where the French had

made so formidable an impression. But it was too late; and the duke, after a vain attempt to restore the fortune of the day, was finally compelled to retire within the fortified lines. On this occasion, the loss of the English was 500 killed and wounded, and as many prisoners; and that of the French and Dutch 3000 in killed, wounded, and prisoners. From that day forth, with the exception of one struggle, in which the valour of the allies gained a victory, which, however, did not bring them any of those advantages that are so essential to an invading army, the prospects of the troops became more hopeless every day. The approach of the autumnal rains, in a country, the inhabitants of which, according to ancient authority *, were so exposed to inundations that it was doubtful whether they belonged to the land or the sea, and who, in modern times, have been indebted to the most marvellous efforts of toil and skill for the reclamation of the country from those floods and marshes that were wittily said to render it the “hold of nature †,” raised up new obstacles against the English; and, baffled in a valiant trial to achieve the conquest of Haarlem, the duke of York proposed a suspension of arms, and, under articles agreed to by both parties, evacuated Holland. The issue of this unfortunate enterprise created a bitter, and general disappointment in England; while in Russia it helped to bring out into full activity the smothered enmities of the emperor.

That the Russians should attribute wholly to the Austrians the failure of the expedition to Switzerland was, perhaps, natural enough, and no more than might be charged on the other side; for the Austrians did not hesitate to assert, that the catastrophe of Zurich was to be traced altogether to the want of skill and vigilance on the part of Korsakow. But it soon became evident that the sources of jealousy lay deeper than these vain and unworthy contentions; and that the quarrels which were begun by the soldiers in the field were to terminate in the rupture of the rival cabinets. A slight incident, in the

* Pliny.

† Butler. See the Miscellaneous Thoughts.

first instance, had the effect of discovering more fully the temper of mind that prevailed at Vienna and St. Petersburg. When Suwarrow reached the Rhine, he still meditated a desperate effort for the purpose of endeavouring to repair the calamities that had befallen the army ; and he proposed to the archduke a wild plan for throwing himself upon the banks of the Thur into the centre of the enemy's line, blowing up St. Lucie, and forming a junction with Korsakow. To this proposal the more temperate archduke objected, on account of the great perils that attended it, and recommended another of a less chivalric character. Suwarrow, soured by disappointments, and irritated at being over-ruled by a younger man, and an Austrian, replied in a surly but determined spirit, stating that he would march to join Korsakow, and concluding his letter in these terms : " I am a field-marshal as well as you ; commander, as well as you, of an imperial army ; old, while you are young : it is for you to come and seek me." This intention, however, as we have seen, Suwarrow did not carry into effect. The sudden withdrawal of the troops by the emperor Paul broke up at once the alliance between Austria and Russia. The causes of this angry separation are to be found in the altered relations of the two empires. The objects for which the war was undertaken did not appear, at first, to affect the interests of Russia, except in so far as the principles of government at issue were concerned ; but as the war advanced, and Italy was released from the thralldom of France, it became evident that any further successes on the part of Austria would have the effect of disturbing the balance of power on the very side which had interfered to correct it ; and that, therefore, the continuance of the coalition could be attended by no other results than that of defeating the very purpose for which it was formed, and promoting the views of one member of the alliance at the expense of the other. Paul, perceiving this dangerous advance of Austria, and mortified by defeat, not only broke up the alliance abruptly, but, with his usual vehemence, extended his wrath to every

individual against whom any excuse for contempt or punishment could be devised.

The failure of the expedition to Holland, accom- 1800.
panied by such inglorious circumstances, and the miserable fortunes that followed the remnant of the Russian corps, who, after the evacuation of Holland, were scattered by the English over Guernsey and Jersey, where the language of France, continually filling their ears, reminded them of former disgraces, wrought the exasperated monarch into such a frenzy, that he did not hesitate to revile, in the most opprobrious terms, the coalition of which he had recently been the most active member. He treated the English and Austrian ministers, resident at his court, with personal indignity, refusing to confer with them, and expressing his desire that they should leave St. Petersburg. Even the Danish ambassador came under this measure of prohibition, in consequence of having related, in a letter to a friend, the substance of a conversation with the emperor, in which the latter declared that the coalesced powers instead of a congress ought to convoke a tournament; and that those who had not courage to fight themselves might send their ministers in their places. The letter containing these strange invectives was intercepted, and the ambassador was ordered to quit the capital within twenty-four hours. The capricious and furious conduct of Paul rapidly alienated from him the attachment of the principal families and leading men, who saw, in the career of violence and inconsistency into which he was plunging, a new reign of terror, fatal to the institutions of the empire, and calculated to deprive Russia of all the advantages of her European alliances, and to reduce her once more to her original barbarism. Inaccessible to reason, Paul was indifferent to the consequences of his folly, and persisted in treating the allies with the most marked contempt. He accused the English of being the cause of the disasters in Holland, as he had before accused the Austrians of the unfortunate results of the campaign in Switzerland; and, as these

absurd proceedings gradually weaned even his veteran soldiers of Gatschina from him, he became more rigid, minute, and fickle than ever in the details of military discipline; and, by thus incessantly harassing the troops, he at last rendered their existence insupportable, and converted them into conspirators.

From the violation of the compact with England and Austria to a sudden admiration of Napoleon, who had now returned from Egypt, and ascended to the head of the French government, was an easy step for so insincere and mutable a monarch. He had withdrawn his troops from the Rhine, without condescending to assign any reason for that movement; and, although he had not entered into a treaty of peace with France, it soon became palpable, from the tone he adopted towards the allies, that he was well disposed to entertain the most friendly relations with Napoleon, and that it only required an advance on the side of the latter to propitiate his good will. Napoleon was too well aware of the importance of neutralising the hostility of Russia, not to seize upon the earliest opportunity of showing his desire to cultivate the friendship of Paul; and, acting with promptitude upon this politic determination, he proposed to the British government to include the Russian prisoners with the English in the exchange for the French. To this proposal the British government returned a decided negative, upon these grounds:—first, that Paul had not thought fit to solicit such an exchange; and, second, that his doubtful conduct, in suddenly withdrawing his troops from the German alliance, deprived him of all title to such an act of generosity. This was the moment for Napoleon to work upon the feelings of the wavering and fretful Paul. Professing the utmost indignation at the refusal of England to liberate the heroic Russians, he set them at liberty without any exchange or stipulation whatever; and not only sent them to their own country, but restored to them their arms and standards, and clothed them anew in the uniform of their respective regiments. Such an act of courtesy and

munificence could not fail to elicit expressions of the warmest acknowledgment from the emperor, and to lead to an interchange of good offices between the two courts, which circumstances speedily ripened into an alliance.

While these events were taking place, and the allied powers were suspended in astonishment at the weakness of Paul, the battle of Marengo, and the armistice of Alexandria, exposed the government of Naples to the most imminent danger from the victorious troops of the republic. The queen of Naples, left alone to combat a force before which the veteran bands of Austria and Russia had struggled in vain, adopted a resolution, which was not less extraordinary as a *dernier resort* than it was enterprising and courageous. She set out in person for St. Petersburg, to implore the intercession of the emperor with Napoleon on behalf of her little kingdom ; and Paul, flattered by her petition, and struck with admiration by the adventure of a queen undertaking, in the depth of a winter, an arduous journey from Palermo to St. Petersburg, warmly espoused her cause, and promised to use all his influence with the first consul for the attainment of her wishes. He accordingly despatched M. Lowescheff, an officer of his household, to Napoleon, to give additional weight to his mediation with the court of the Tuileries. Napoleon was thus afforded a second opportunity of exhibiting his desire to secure the friendship of Paul, and he turned it adroitly to the best advantage. M. Lowescheff was received with the distinctions that are ordinarily paid to crowned heads. The Italians were amazed at the honours which were heaped upon the head of this minister ; but they were still more bewildered by the result of his mission, which terminated in the exclusion of Naples from the articles of the armistice at Treviso, Napoleon undertaking alone to regulate the destinies of that kingdom. The ports of Naples and Sicily were instantly closed by Napoleon against English vessels of merchandise as well as war.

Paul's impetuosity, in the new circumstances in which

he was placed by his good understanding with Napoleon, now hurried him into the most absurd extremes. The conquest of Malta by a British squadron was regarded by him as an infringement of the convention of 1798, which, he asserted, contained a stipulation that the island should be given up to the order of Jerusalem; but, as no such stipulation was really contained in the treaty, his demand for restitution was refused. No further pretext was necessary to inflame him into an act of unwarrantable violence. He immediately ordered an embargo to be put upon all the British ships in the Russian harbours, by which nearly 300 vessels, with valuable cargoes on board, were detained until the frost had set in, and the Baltic had become impassable. He also seized the crews of these vessels, and shut them up in prisons in the interior, many of them more than 1000 miles distant from the coast; and put the whole of the English property on shore under sequestration. A few vessels at Narva having weighed anchor, and escaped, he was so incensed that he burned the remainder. These outrages were not only contrary to the usages of all civilised states, but were in direct violation of an article in an existing treaty between Russia and England, by which it was expressly stipulated that, in the event of a rupture between the two powers, no embargo should be laid on the vessels of either, but that the merchants on both sides should be allowed a year to convey away or dispose of their goods. This flagrant proceeding was the first outbreak of that spirit of combination against England which was now taking the alarming shape of a maritime coalition of the northern powers. Napoleon was energetic in promoting the formation of this confederacy. Sweden had early entered into the project; but Denmark, who was lucratively engaged in the carrying trade of England, hesitated at first, until, pressed by Prussia, whose troops exercised a direct power over her most important continental possessions, she at last consented; and a maritime confederacy was, accordingly, signed by Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, and, subse-

quently, subscribed by Prussia as an acceding party. This treaty was completed in the month of December, 1800. The British government, regarding this proceeding with the utmost jealousy, resolved to retaliate; and, on the 14th January, 1801, issued an order for a general embargo on all vessels belonging to the confederation, Prussia excepted, whose accession to the league was not then known in England. Letters of marque were also issued for the capture of the numerous vessels belonging to those states that were trading to the Baltic; and these movements were followed up so vigorously, that nearly one half of the merchantmen of the northern powers were soon to be found in the British harbours. Active preparations were now made on all sides for a war, which the threatening aspect of affairs rendered unavoidable. England, who had strengthened both her army and her navy, saw that her safety depended upon striking a decisive blow before the naval forces of the confederacy could be united; and, with the utmost promptitude, she prepared an expedition against Copenhagen, hoping, however, in the first instance, to arrange the existing differences by negotiation, for which purpose Mr. Vansittart accompanied the squadron in the character of plenipotentiary. That hope, however, was disappointed by the obstinacy of the Danes; and, the British fleet having made the passage of the Sound, the appeal to arms was rendered inevitable.

During the progress of these events, the alliance between Paul and Napoleon was cherished with increasing ardour on both sides. Napoleon was eager to avail himself of the assistance of Paul while the mood lasted; and as they were mutually concerned in assailing the power of England—the one by the obvious course of his policy, and the other by no higher motive than his imperial spleen—a formal agreement was entered into between them for overthrowing the supremacy of Great Britain in India. As this agreement, although subsequent circumstances arrested the attempt to carry it into effect, involves a question which still occupies an

important place in the plans of Russia, the details are full of permanent historical interest. It was agreed that 35,000 French, under Massena, should proceed to Ulm, and descend the Danube to the Black sea, from whence a Russian fleet was to transport it to Taganrok; that it was then to move to the Volga, where it would find boats to convey it to Astracan, at which point it was to be joined by 35,000 Russians and 50,000 Cossacks, amply provided with artillery and horses; and that the combined armies should then be transported by the Caspian sea from Astracan to Astrabat, where magazines of all sorts should be established for its use. The march from the frontiers of France to Astrabat was estimated at eighty days, and fifty more were considered requisite to bring the army to the banks of the Indus by the route of Herat, Ferah, and Candahar. The feasibility of this project has been doubted by some competent authorities; but it is a strong argument in its favour that it was conceived by Napoleon, who held it to be perfectly practicable.

As these extravagant designs of Paul in his foreign policy were gradually arriving at maturity, his proceedings at home assumed daily a more arbitrary complexion. Veering from one speculation to another, and constant only to those measures of severity which increased in their scope as his growing fears magnified the hatred by which he was surrounded, he exhibited the most tyrannical vacillations; visiting with punishment one day the very acts which he encouraged in his creatures only the day before. It soon became evident to the empire, that he had lost all command over his passions, and that he was no longer guided by any intelligible principles of government. In the height of one of those paroxysms of enthusiasm which are said to have given a romantic tinge to his character, he conceived the project of taking under his special protection the mysterious institution of freemasonry. The notion of regenerating an order which was secretly diffused throughout every country of Europe, and of placing

himself at its head, flattered his petty ambition ; and he carried the design into effect so far as to establish a committee to examine the acts and statutes of the freemasons, with a view to revise their organisation. But as quickly as this plan was formed it was superseded by another ; and the freemasons were not only abandoned in favour of the more brilliant order of Malta, a continuation of that of the Templars, and deriving its origin from the grandest epoch of modern history, but all secret assemblies were prohibited, and the presidents of the lodges were compelled to promise that they would not hold any meetings without his consent. Thus his protection was speedily converted into oppression ; and the only institutions in the empire which escaped the rigours of his displeasure were those which had never been sheltered by his approbation.

Despotism never, perhaps, showed such a front of horrors as during this terrible portion of the reign of Paul. If he was not as barbarous as Ivan, it was merely because the connection of Russia with the European powers had rendered such extremities dangerous. The emperor, it was true, was still omnipotent, and no regular or efficient check existed upon the authority of the government ; but the alliances which Russia had, since the time of Peter the Great, formed with more civilised governments, operated as a sort of moral restraint upon the conduct of the sovereign. Taking this restraint into consideration, and remembering the important part which Russia aimed at playing on the great theatre of European diplomacy, the proceedings of Paul at this juncture must be regarded as transcending in superfluous cruelty the worst precedents of pure tyranny which the annals of the empire recorded. Exiles and arrests, on the slightest pretexts, took place every day. Kibitkas, filled with prisoners, crowded the roads to Siberia and the Prussian frontier : and the sentences were frequently issued with such rapidity, that the unfortunate victims were not allowed time to settle their affairs, or even to provide clothing

against the rigours of the inclement climate to which they were transported. The rage of Paul was indiscriminate, and fell without distinction upon all classes of society, courtiers, merchants, men of letters, military men, and women. Banishment, or the knout, were resorted to for the slightest faults, and often where no faults whatever were committed. The war against the round hats was revived; and the form of a coat, or the colour of a riband, sufficed to send the delinquent into exile. Foreign works of every kind were prohibited by the censorship; but as at first there was no list of the forbidden books, and the Index of Vienna was adopted as the rule, some strange mistakes occurred. At Vienna, several works of piety, and tracts on the Greek religion, were excluded from circulation, and, under this arrangement, they were also rejected by the Russian censorship. The contradictions and absurdities which were thus sanctioned by the emperor at last produced an impression that he laboured under a certain degree of insanity; a suspicion which was afterwards entertained by Napoleon, who declared that he thought, "latterly, Paul was mad."* The state papers and articles that appeared under his own hand, in the St. Petersburg gazette, confirmed this belief. On one occasion, he published in that journal an invitation to the sovereigns of Europe to come to St. Petersburg and settle their disputes by a combat, with their ministers, Pitt, Thugut, Bernstorff, and Talleyrand, as esquires. Whenever despatches were presented to him from the British government, proposing terms of conciliation, he pierced them with his penknife, and returned them unopened.

It was supposed by some persons that his mental derangement was produced by the disappointment of an illicit passion, which he entertained for the countess Lapoukhin, a lady of the court, who preferred a legitimate union with the prince Gagarin to the dangerous honour proposed to her by the emperor. This circumstance threw him into an ungovernable temper, which

* O'Meara.

he vented upon every person within his reach. A short time before, in a fit of rage, he had banished another mistress; and such was the effect which his passion had produced upon him that even the empress herself interceded for her recal. The count Koutaisof, whom he had recently taken into favour, and who possessed considerable ascendancy over his mind, was also supposed to have suggested many of his frantic acts. But court favourites are always exposed to accusations of that kind, which are the unavoidable penalties of their position; and Koutaisof defended himself by saying, that he was frequently ill-treated himself by the capricious master he served.* There is no doubt, however, that the elevation of Koutaisof to the confidence of the sovereign, gave great offence to the nobility, and conspired, with other causes, to provoke the discontent which now became general amongst them. They saw, with undisguised apprehension, that all the recognised principles of Russian policy were abandoned, and that an alliance had been formed with a revolutionary state, to the exclusion of the maritime power, upon which they relied for a market for the productions of the empire. Their interests as landed proprietors were deeply injured by the suspension of commercial intercourse with England; a consideration which also pressed heavily upon the

* Koutaisof was a Turk of low origin, who had been originally *valet-de-chambre* to Paul, and who rose, at last, to be his confidant and minister. Such was the power which this man obtained over the emperor, that even the nobility, who detested him, bowed before his authority. Suwarrow alone, unaccustomed to the servility of courts, did not hesitate to humiliate him by the expression of his contempt. Paul had occasion one day to communicate with Suwarrow, and sent this favourite to the veteran to convey his commands. When the name of count Koutaisof was announced, Suwarrow exclaimed, "Koutaisof! I do not know a Russian family of that name." Koutaisof replied "that he was a Turk, and that the favour of the emperor had elevated him to the dignity with which he was invested." "You have, without doubt," responded Suwarrow, "distinguished yourself in arms?" "I have never served in the field," answered Koutaisof. "Or in the ministry?" inquired Suwarrow. "I have not been charged with civil affairs," said Koutaisof: "I have always been placed near the person of the emperor." "Well, well," persevered the old general, "and in what capacity?" Koutaisof wished to turn the conversation, but the pitiless warrior pursued his questions, until he forced him to avow that he had been *valet-de-chambre*. Suwarrow then turned to his own servant, and said, "See, Ivan, what it is to conduct oneself well: this lord was once what thou art — behold him now decorated with a blue riband," — *Levesque*.

mercantile classes, who felt that it would be perilous to enter into any speculations while the conduct of the government was so variable and insecure.

These combined motives, rendered more pressing every day by the increasing violence of Paul, at last produced a conspiracy, less formidable from its numbers than from the high and confidential situations which were held in the state by the persons of whom it was composed. At the head of this conspiracy were the three Zubofs,—prince Plato, the last acknowledged favourite of the empress Catherine; Valerien, colonel-in-chief of the artillery; and Nicholas, grand equerry, then general of the cavalry. In addition to these were general Beningsen, an Englishman in the service of Russia, who afterwards distinguished himself in the war against France; general Ouvaroff, colonel of the horse-guards; colonel Tatarmoff, colonel Jesselowitz, and general Jaschwel. It is remarkable that the individuals who entered into this plot against the monarch were not amongst the victims of his despotism—officers, who had been displaced or punished in fits of passion—intelligent courtiers, who had offended him by tendering unwelcome counsel—or men of letters, or philosophers, who had been crushed by his iron rule for asserting the right to a free expression of their opinions; but that they were all the creatures of his ill-bestowed favours, who, it appears, felt his bounty to be even more oppressive than his tyranny. This fact is a warning illustration of the insecurity of kings who govern through the fears, and not through the affections, of their subjects. The project of the conspirators was to dethrone the emperor; but when they passed the limits of that sacred regard in which the person of the autocrat was held by the slavish superstition of the multitude, and, breaking down the barrier that divided him from the people, were courageous enough to dictate terms of submission to him, it was no longer possible to restrain the passions which were thus let loose. The experience of all time confirms the truth of the adage, that from the prisons of princes it is but

a step to the grave ; yet such was the terror that Paul had inspired, that, although the necessity of hastening the execution of their design was momentarily increased by the certainty of death which awaited them in the event of a discovery, not one of the conspirators made any decisive movement. They wanted a leader, a man of coolness and intrepidity, who was capable of guiding their plans, and of infusing incessant activity into their operations. Such a man, at last, was found in count Pahlen, the military governor of St. Petersburg, whose office afforded him the most favourable opportunities of controlling and directing the arrangements of the conspiracy. Pahlen possessed many requisites for this dangerous enterprise. He bore an unimpeachable character, which elevated him above all suspicion : his administration of his office was in the highest degree popular : his probity procured him universal confidence ; and the suavity of his manners surrounded him with friendships, even amongst those who espoused political opinions different from his own. But, under this calm and imposing exterior, Pahlen concealed a restless ambition, which made him abhor the bondage of a master whose will was as absolute as it was fickle. He had long entertained a desire to remove the obnoxious sovereign, and to place the young prince Alexander on the throne, hoping to ascend to the first place in the councils of the inexperienced monarch, and even to reign over the empire in his name. The art with which he laboured to effect this object was worthy of the audacity of the design. His first care was to alienate from the favour of Paul all those courtiers whom he could not win over to his views ; and the first person whom he succeeded in disgracing was the vice-chancellor of foreign affairs. The vigilance of the vice-chancellor had enabled that minister to intercept a correspondence between one of the conspirators in Moscow and an agent at St. Petersburg ; and, when the papers were laid before Paul, the person to whom they were addressed was immediately summoned to answer for their contents. The fervour and apparent sincerity with

which he repelled the imputation of treason threw the emperor off his guard ; and Pahlen, taking advantage of this turn of fortune in his favour, speedily obtained the dismissal of the vice-chancellor, who had been so unfortunate as to bring a charge which he did not possess the full means of justifying.

But Pahlen had a still more difficult part to act in reference to Alexander. He saw clearly enough the dangers on both sides : that, if he failed, his life was forfeited to Paul ; and that, if he succeeded, he would risk the vengeance of Alexander. His double treachery consisted in conducting his plot with such dexterity that, in either case, he should be safe. He felt the necessity of implicating Alexander in his project, and thus placing him between the emperor and himself. For this purpose he secretly excited Paul against the grand dukes Alexander and Constantine, and in turn worked upon their fears to excite them against Paul. He made it appear to them that it was their rights he wished to establish ; and, without suffering any insinuation to escape that his project would be attended with danger to the life of Paul, he merely urged that the safety of the empire indispensably required that the emperor's insanity should not be allowed to produce any further injury to the public interests. The apprehension of the peril in which they were placed by the natural violence of their father's temper, which was considerably increased by hints he had dropped of his intention of sending Alexander to Siberia, of immuring Constantine in a dungeon, and the empress-mother in the cloisters, induced them to lend a more willing ear to the specious representations of Pahlen. Yet they could not be brought over to take any part in the conspiracy, notwithstanding that the inexplicable conduct of the emperor gave them every day fresh causes of alarm. Deceived by all those in whom he had placed confidence, Paul imagined that every person who approached him was an assassin. He occupied himself exclusively in devising the means of self-preservation. The police of St. Petersburg, the most rigorous in the

world, absorbed his whole thoughts, to the total neglect of the affairs of the country. But the young princes bore his dark humours in silence, and could not be tempted to embark in the plot against his authority. Pahlen, finding that he could not make the impression he desired upon the mind of Alexander, adopted the daring measure of denouncing him to Paul as a traitor, formally declaring that he could not answer for his personal safety if he did not issue an order for the arrest of the prince. Moved alike by his terrors and his vengeance, Paul at once acceded to this insidious suggestion, and signed an authority for the arrest of his son. Provided with this document, which he held as a final argument to decide the temerity of the prince, Pahlen presented himself before the grand duke, and, exhibiting the order, strongly urged upon him the imperative necessity of anticipating its fatal purpose by forcing his father to abdicate. Overcome with horror at the sight of the cruel instrument, and not knowing which way to decide, Alexander betrayed the irresolution that was natural to the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed ; and Pahlen, interpreting his indecision into a tacit acquiescence in his advice, resolved to act upon it without delay.

But while Pahlen was preparing his measures for the catastrophe, unexpected dangers were thickening around him. Some vague rumours had reached Paul of the existence of a conspiracy ; and, instantly sending for Pahlen, he acquainted him with his apprehensions, and desire him to spare no means of informing himself of the facts. "Sire," replied Pahlen, "I know it all ; and, in order to assure myself of the guilty, I am myself a conspirator." This frank avowal, and his reliance upon the integrity of Pahlen, tranquillised the emperor, who now trusted entirely to his vigilance. But, shortly after this interview, Paul received still more explicit information of the plot from the attorney-general, which confirmed all his doubts, and led him to suspect that Pahlen had taken a real, and not a feigned, part in the

treasonable design. He immediately despatched a courier to Araktscheïeff, formerly governor of St. Petersburg, who then commanded some trusted troops at a distance of 40 versts from the capital ; and, informing him that Pahlen had betrayed him, he required his presence without delay ; adding that, if he deferred his march a single instant, all was lost. Pahlen, whose activity put him in possession of every movement that took place at the palace, arrested the courier ; and, seizing his dispatches, discovered the peril in which he was placed.* He saw that even a short delay might defeat all the plans he had laid with so much skill and circumspection ; and, certain in some degree of impunity, whichever way the conspiracy terminated, he fixed at once on the following day for the accomplishment of his purpose.

The fate of Paul was in this respect hard, that he received several warnings of the impending design, but was in each instance prevented by untoward circumstances from averting its execution. On the morning of the appointed day he rode out into the Place Suwarow, accompanied by Koutaisoff, and was suddenly accosted by a man belonging to the lower classes, who presented a letter to him : at that moment the emperor's horse reared, and Koutaisoff took the letter, and put it into his pocket. On changing his dress in the evening, to dine with Paul, he forgot it, and afterwards returned to get it ; but Paul, becoming impatient of his absence, sent for him in haste ; and he was obliged to come back without it. That letter was from the prince Mechercki, and revealed the whole plot, with the names of the conspirators. Again, that evening, another note was transmitted to him, which he received while he was at supper with his mistress ; but, putting it into his pocket, supposing it to be on public business, he said he

* According to some accounts of this affair, Paul, contrary to his custom, signed the passport for the courier, which properly belonged to Pahlen's department. This circumstance excited the count's suspicion, and led to the arrest of the messenger.

would read it the next day. He retired to bed in the palace of St. Michel.*

The hour for the fulfilment of the plot now rapidly approached. The time was well chosen for such a purpose, and favoured the plans of the conspirators. It was the period of the *maslanitza*, or Russian carnival, during which the whole population surrender themselves to riot and festivity. At eleven o'clock at night, twenty of the conspirators presented themselves at the side door of the palace, opening on the gardens ; but they were at first refused admittance by the hussar on duty. The prince Zubof, however, said that they had been sent for by the emperor, who was that night to hold a council of war ; and the sentry, seeing so many general officers in full regimentals, was easily induced to credit this statement, and suffered them to pass without further interruption. They ascended the staircase in silence ; and, reaching the antechamber, Argamakoff, the aide-de-camp in waiting, went forward alone. He informed the cossack on guard that there was a fire in the city, and that he came to awaken the emperor † ; and was immediately allowed to advance to the door of the royal apartment, at which he knocked, announcing his name. Paul, who was in bed, recognising his voice, opened the door by means of a string. The way being clear, Argamakoff returned for the other conspirators, who now crowded into the antechamber. The cossack, perceiving the error he had committed, and judging by the looks and confusion of the conspirators the object for which they had come, called out " Treason ! " and attempted to resist them, but was cut down on the spot. The conspirators rushed into the bedroom, but found it empty. Paul, warned by the cries of the cossack, had fled for safety into one of two closets which adjoined the apartment, in which flags taken in battle, and arms

* This palace was built by Paul, under the express orders, as he declared, of the archangel. He had inhabited it only forty days — a remarkable number, sacred to the priests and the people.

† The emperor of Russia, like the emperor of China, is required by the laws to attend in person every fire that takes place in the capital.

belonging to officers confined in the fortress, were deposited. Seizing a sword, and trembling with agitation, he attempted, undressed, to gain the private staircase; but it was too late. The first impression of the conspirators was that he had escaped; but one of them, putting his hand on the bed-clothes, and feeling that they were warm, observed that he could not be far off. General Beningsen at that instant perceived the emperor crouched behind a screen, and insultingly dragged him from his retreat. Paul, however, did not lose his presence of mind, habitual domination and imperious rage supplying him with false courage; and, perceiving amongst the traitors some whom he had loaded with favours, he reproached them in the bitterest terms with their ingratitude. Count Plato, unmoved by these just and touching remonstrances, read to him the act of abdication that had been prepared, and required him to sign it without delay. The reply of Paul was a torrent of invectives, mingled with allusions to past benefits which he had bestowed on Plato in particular. To these angry expressions Plato coldly answered, "You are no longer emperor;" calling upon him at the same time to surrender in the name of the emperor Alexander; upon which, unable any longer to suppress his fury, Paul attempted to strike him. The conspirators, dismayed at this act of boldness, appeared to hesitate, when Beningsen urged their lagging spirit by exclaiming, that it was all over with them if Paul escaped. Nicholas, stimulated by this appeal, closed with the emperor, and, by a single blow, broke his right arm. His accomplices, encouraged by the audacious example, threw themselves upon Paul, and the tumult became general. The emperor made a desperate resistance, but fell at last, overpowered by numbers, and exhausted by loss of blood. While he was upon the ground they treated him with the most revolting indignity; and then, passing a sash round his neck, terminated his agony. His last words were, "And

you, too, my Constantine !” * Pahlen, who was too prudent to take a personal share in the assassination, was at that moment marching at the head of a regiment of guards towards the palace, prepared to take whichever side should happen to succeed.†

During this terrible scene the grand-duke Alexander was in a room below ; and, upon the return of the conspirators, he eagerly demanded whether the life of his father was spared. Confounded by the dreadful announcement of what had taken place, he tore his hair, and, uttering passionate expressions of sorrow, refused at first to allow himself to be nominated to the succession. But the news of the death had no sooner spread through the streets than the populace assembled in crowds beneath the windows of the palace, and rent the air with shouts. They called for Alexander with loud acclamations ; and the spectacle of violent joy which the city exhibited resembled the celebration of some great festival rather than the occasion of a regicide. It was in vain that the feelings of the prince would have led him to decline the throne under such circumstances. Any attempt to revenge the death of his father would, probably, have produced a revolution : every one of the assembled multitude would have declared himself an accomplice ; and it was with difficulty they were prevented from hailing the assassins as the deliverers of the country. The chief members of the nobility, the principal persons who held offices about the court, and the magistrates of the city, repaired immediately to tender their allegiance to the new sovereign. Pahlen, collected and firm in the moment of excitement, headed the deputation, and read the address, which represented a total change of policy as being indispensably necessary, and

* This appalling fact is endeavoured to be explained, by the assertion that the dress of one of the conspirators caused the emperor to mistake him for his son. We leave this point in the mystery in which we find it.

† Pahlen is said by some writers to have been present at the murder. Alison, amongst others, adopts that statement. But the authorities that have the most direct weight in the narrative agree in the account we have given.

declared that nothing now remained but for Alexander to assume the reins of government.*

* It was, perhaps, hardly to be expected that all the circumstances attending the regicide of Paul should be faithfully and fully reported. There were too many persons interested in concealing or misrepresenting them to permit an accurate statement to escape; hence, we have several conflicting accounts of the particulars of that night of horrors, which, although they agree in the main facts, differ upon the details. We have endeavoured to attain as much correctness in the relation of those events as the evidence of the best accessible authorities would enable us. It is stated, by some writers, that Paul, from the moment he saw the conspirators, until they broke out into violence, did not utter a single word, but fell into a sort of stupor, from whence he was awakened by prince Tatchwill, the major-general of artillery, who, inflamed by wine, came in with several of his companions; and, finding Beningsen, and seven or eight of his friends, standing motionless in the room, furiously attacked the emperor, and, overturning the lamp, involved the apartment in darkness. In the struggle that followed, Beningsen, according to this authority, is said to have repeatedly urged Paul not to attempt to escape or to defend himself, as he feared his life would be the penalty; and, throughout the whole scene, Beningsen did not take any more active part. Having left the room to procure a light, he found Paul, on his return, lying on the ground, strangled. The only resistance which Paul is said, by this account, to have made, was putting his hand between his neck and the sash, exclaiming in French, "Gentlemen, for heaven's sake spare me! leave me time to pray to God!" which were his last words. For many reasons we do not consider this statement to be authentic: it is inconsistent with the violent character of Paul, who might reasonably be supposed to reproach his assassins with the favours he had bestowed upon them; and it is equally inconsistent with the part which Beningsen took in the affair, having that night supped at general Talizin's with Pahlen and the other leaders, and undertaken, with the energy which is known to have distinguished him, the bold office of heading the party at the palace. The scenes which followed the assassination were deeply affecting, and serve to show the state of domestic feeling in the household of the emperor. Alexander was so affected by his apprehensions about the empress-mother, that Pahlen undertook to break the intelligence to her. The empress was still asleep; and, although her apartments were close to those of the emperor, she was not disturbed by what had taken place. The countess Lieven, instructed by Pahlen, proceeded to her apartment to announce the news. The empress thought at first that it was the death of her daughter, the princess palatine of Hungary. "No, madam," replied the countess, "your majesty must survive a greater misfortune: the emperor has just died in a fit of apoplexy." "No, no!" exclaimed the empress, "he has been assassinated!" The countess then confessed the truth. Her majesty, hastily dressing herself, immediately rushed towards the chamber of Paul, but was stopped in the intermediate saloon by a lieutenant of a troop of men that had been stationed there. Notwithstanding her determination to proceed, they would not suffer her to pass; and obstructed her at last by crossing their bayonets to prevent her. Bursting into a fit of royal passion, she struck the lieutenant on the ear, and sunk, fainting, into an arm-chair. The grand duchess, who had followed her, endeavoured to restore her; and, when a glass of water was brought for her to drink, a soldier, hastily seizing, drank a little of it, and then, presenting it to the empress, exclaimed, "You may drink it, madam, without apprehension; there is no poison in it." So soon as she recovered, she declared her determination to assert her rights, observing that, by virtue of her coronation, she was the reigning empress, and that the oath of allegiance ought to be taken to her. Even in the midst of the terrors by which she was surrounded this was the object of her paramount anxiety; but the activity of Pahlen anticipated her intentions; and she was, at last, with great reluctance, induced to swear allegiance to her son.

It is fortunate, for the vindication of the necessity upon which all governments are based, that in the characters of the greatest despots there are some traits of goodness, some virtuous qualities, upon which the mind may repose in relief from the contemplation of their vices and their crimes. The unfortunate Paul, who might, perhaps, be regarded as having been in some measure the victim of the unfavourable circumstances in which he passed his youth, was not utterly destitute of some claims to the respect of mankind. His life was embittered at its spring. Like his father he was educated in adversity, and brought up more as a prisoner of state than the inheritor of a throne. Unexpectedly called upon to reign over a great empire, he developed in the first instance a magnanimity of spirit that equally surprised and captivated the people. Instead of betraying a disposition soured by the oppressions of thirty years, he displayed remarkable moderation and generosity. He reinstated the ministers and favourites of Catherine, liberated Koscuisko and others who had been unjustly imprisoned by Biren, Munich, and Lestocq, humiliated the enemies and assassins of his father, whose remains he disinterred that he might render filial and royal honours to them, and appeared inclined to extend his protection to every quarter that had formerly been exposed to the contumely and caprice of the court. Nor was this all. The early measures of his administration discovered a capacity for government which induced all classes to place confidence in his judgment. Finding the empire exhausted by the profligate expenditure of his predecessors, he suspended the levy against France, and recalled the army that was employed upon a ruinous expedition in Persia; and his act for the establishment of the hereditary succession to the crown was received as a boon of the highest importance by the nation, who had hitherto experienced all the evils that are inseparable from unsettled rights. But the recapitulation of the benefits which Paul conferred upon Russia extends unhappily over a very limited space. He began his

reign by promises full of wisdom and temperance, but there was scarcely time for the national joy to find its way to the throne before his whole nature had undergone an inexplicable change.

The hatred in which he held the memory of his mother possessed a superstitious influence over his mind, and committed him to numerous follies. Had his weakness been confined to this single point, upon which he had received much provocation, history might have veiled his errors in consideration of the worthier acts of his career; but the same petty contest of antipathies pervaded his whole life. He viewed every subject through the medium of personal feelings. He declared war upon Spain from motives that had reference solely to himself; he formed a European confederation against France, simply because he had conceived a dislike to the character of the French people; and he abandoned it in pure jealousy of Austria, entering at the same time into an alliance with his recent enemy for the more complete gratification of his spleen: deprived by England of the opportunity of solacing his vanity at Malta, he originated a maritime coalition of the northern states, in the hope of destroying the commercial supremacy of that power; and had not his dangerous course been arrested before some of the schemes into which he entered had reached maturity, he must at last have plunged Europe into a war without having any definite grievance to redress, or any legitimate object to attain. Throughout his entire reign there is not a single evidence of adherence to any principles of policy, or even of fidelity to any purpose which he took in hand. The reach of his intellect was small, and his inconstancy rendered it infirm. He was treacherous to his friends, and faithless to himself. His active and regular habits only served to give efficacy to his caprices and his passions, and, wanting a proper and useful direction, plunged him into turbulence. Whenever he attempted a reform, he inflicted more evil than he remedied. Thus when he undertook to regulate the finances and the monetary

system he reduced the empire to the brink of bankruptcy ; and he carried his improvements in the discipline of the army to such an excess, that he at last produced a military revolution. Inconsistency was so uniform throughout his proceedings that his patronage was invariably followed by disgrace, and his sanction counteracted by prohibition. A perpetual contradiction seemed to perplex all his movements. After sending Suwarrow into exile he recalled him to place him at the head of the imperial forces ; he condemned with unmeasured severity the lavish expenditure of Catherine, and degenerated into a more wasteful and less splendid extravagance himself ; and, beginning his reign with sentiments of implacable hostility against republican institutions, he ended it by entering into a league against monarchies. His blind vehemence, his arrogance, cruelty, and indecision — the desolation which in his latter days he spread around him — his deficiency in ordinary prudence and foresight — and the perversity with which he arrayed himself in opposition to the plainest suggestions of justice and common sense would justify posterity in pronouncing Paul to have been the greatest despot of modern times, if the very absurdity of his acts did not warrant the more charitable conclusion that he was insane.

Nearly at the same time that Paul was assassinated, the victorious issue of the battle of Copenhagen dissolved the power of that formidable coalition which was designed to destroy the maritime influence of England. Napoleon, irritated by this unexpected event, announced it to the French people in these words : — “ Paul I. died on the night of the 23d of March. The English fleet passed the Sound on the 30th. History will unveil the connection which may have existed between these events.” The insinuation conveyed in this memorable passage has been more explicitly delivered by the French writers of a subsequent day, who were, probably, desirous to make history discharge the functions assigned to her by Napoleon. They assert that lord Whitworth, the English minister resident at St. Petersburg, was privy to the

murder of the emperor, which was, they say, essential to the success of the English expedition against Denmark. Had Paul lived, the Baltic, according to these writers, would have been the grave of the English fleet; and those who conceived the project, they add, were aware, without doubt, that the moment they penetrated the Baltic, the power that reigned there—Russia—would have ceased to be formidable. This is unquestionably the most clumsy fabrication on record. The expedition was imposed upon England by the frantic and deceitful conduct of Paul; and, whether he lived or died, the result, which took place before his death was known in Copenhagen, must have rendered Russia equally powerless in the Baltic. That lord Whitworth was concerned in the conspiracy is a gratuitous invention. His aid was not wanted. Russia had long before conspired against Paul; and the only matter of surprise is, not that Paul was assassinated, but that, in a country where such deeds are of common occurrence, he was permitted to live so long.

CHAP. VIII.

ALEXANDER ASCENDS THE THRONE. — HE PROFESSES TO GOVERN ON THE PRINCIPLES OF CATHERINE II. — TREATY OF PEACE WITH ENGLAND. — TREATY OF ALLIANCE WITH SWEDEN. — DOMESTIC REFORMS. — CONVENTION WITH FRANCE. ANNEXATION OF GEORGIA TO THE EMPIRE. — INCREASING PROSPERITY OF RUSSIA. — ARBITRARY PROCEEDINGS OF NAPOLEON. — EXECUTION OF THE DUKE D'ENGHEIN. — SPIRITED INTERPOSITION AND PROTEST OF ALEXANDER. — HIS CONTRASTED POLICY IN EUROPE AND IN THE EAST. — WARLIKE PREPARATIONS IN RUSSIA. — ENCROACHMENTS ON PERSIA. — PROPOSED TREATY AGAINST FRANCE. — NAPOLEON INVADÉS AUSTRIA. — RAPID VICTORIES OF THE FRENCH. — ALEXANDER VISITS FREDERIC OF PRUSSIA, AND HASTENS TO JOIN THE ARMY AT OLMUTZ. — BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ. — INTERVIEW BETWEEN NAPOLEON AND THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA. — AN ARMISTICE AGREED UPON. — THE RUSSIANS EVACUATE THE AUSTRIAN STATES.

ON the 24th of March, Alexander Paulovitch ascended ^{1801,} the throne of all the Russias. It was remarked by a woman of rank, upon the occasion of the ceremony, that the "young emperor walked, preceded by the assassins of his grandfather, followed by those of his father, and surrounded by his own." * This ominous epigram explains, in some degree, the state of society in the empire. Despotism had rendered every thing insecure. It was felt that the throne was erected upon a volcanic soil, and that even the most popular sovereign was exposed to dangers against which it was impossible to guard. The accession of Alexander was, however, an event of unfeigned joy to the people. His education, which had been directed by the empress Catherine, under the conduct of the celebrated La Harpe, who was to him what Lefort had been, a hundred years before, to Peter the Great,

* "There," said Fouché in reference to this observation, "is a woman who speaks Tacitus." Fouché must have meant Tacitus translated into French.

and who, like Lefort, was a native of Geneva, admirably adapted him for the high station to which he was called : and the implicit reliance which his subjects were disposed to place upon his talents and his disposition was justified at once by the spirit with which he entered upon the duties of the government. He was only twenty-three years of age when he succeeded his father. He had married the princess Louisa of Baden, at the early age of sixteen ; the princess taking the name of Elizabeth-Alexiwna upon adopting the Greek religion, which is required of all foreign princesses who marry into the imperial family of Russia.

The persons who had been concerned in the conspiracy against Paul were at once invested by Alexander with the chief offices of state. This necessity was forced upon him by the exigency of his position. They had placed him upon the throne, and he was compelled, for the moment, to admit them to his confidence. But it soon became evident that the firmness of his character would not allow him to submit to thier dictation ; and he, at length, gradually relieved himself from their presence.*

The morning after his elevation to the throne, Alexander issued a proclamation, in which he declared his intention of governing the empire according to the sound maxims and wise plans of his august grandmother, Catherine II. ; and as no allusion whatever was made to his father, whose name and government were passed over in silence, this announcement diffused the utmost satisfaction amongst the people. Fully appreciating the high and responsible destinies to which he was called, at the head of the most formidable empire in the world, and placed midway between civilisation and barbarism at a

* The empress-mother, who never ceased to avow her horror at the murder of Paul, caused a picture to be painted, representing him on his death-bed, and ordered it to be publicly exposed in the front of the founding hospital, which was under her own charge. Count Pahlen, alarmed at the exhibition, and the crowds which it attracted, prevailed on Alexander to intercede with his mother for its removal. But that princess replied with indignation, " My son, you must choose between Pahlen and me." It was immediately intimated to Pahlen, that he must leave St. Petersburg, in a private manner. Pahlen instantly resigned all his offices, and in two hours was on his way to Riga.

period when the whole of Europe was exhausted by a procrastinated war, he discovered a solidity of judgment and a strength of purpose, which were hardly to have been expected from so young a prince. The first act of his reign exhibited his earnest desire to restore to Russia the blessings of peace, and to re-establish amicable relations with the belligerent powers. With these judicious principles in view, he wrote a letter to the king of England, with his own hand, in which he expressed in the warmest terms his anxiety to arrange the existing differences by friendly negotiations; and, as an evidence of the sincerity of his feelings, he issued an order for the immediate liberation of the British sailors and captains who had been imprisoned in the interior by Paul, directing that they should be carefully conducted, at the public expense, to the ports from which they had been taken. He revoked, at the same time, the prohibition that had been laid upon the importation of corn—a measure which was equally beneficial to England and to the great Russian proprietors, who suffered heavily from the glut of native produce which this rash policy of Paul had occasioned. He also wrote to sir Hyde Parker, then in command of the English fleet in the Baltic, informing him that he had set at liberty the crews of the British ships; that he was willing to close with the amicable propositions made by the British government to his predecessor, provided it could be done without any violation of good faith to his allies; and concluding by holding him responsible for any act of hostility that might subsequently take place. This conciliatory spirit was promptly met by the British government; and Nelson, who had superseded Parker in the command, actuated by the desire to promote the friendly adjustment of the dissensions between England and the northern powers, stood out to sea from the shores of the Baltic, which were so recently menaced by his flag. These proceedings afforded considerable satisfaction to the court of Berlin, which had regarded the war with England as an impolitic step; but they gave great umbrage to Napoleon, notwithstanding.

ing that Alexander had written to him in a tone that exhibited the most pacific dispositions. Lord St. Helen's was accredited at once as ambassador to St. Petersburg by the king of England, and a treaty of peace was signed by the two powers, which terminated the maritime confederacy through which Paul had attempted to destroy the naval ascendancy of Great Britain. "Europe," observed Napoleon, "beheld with astonishment this ignominious treaty signed by Russia, and which, by consequence, Denmark and Sweden were compelled to adopt. It was equivalent to the admission of the sovereignty of the seas in the British parliament, and the slavery of all other states. This treaty was such that England could have desired nothing more; and a power of the third order would have been ashamed to have signed it." The anger which this convention excited in the mind of Napoleon is, perhaps, the best evidence that could be adduced of the wisdom upon which it was based. The first consul made a strenuous effort to counterbalance the influence of Great Britain by dispatching general Duroc to St. Petersburg immediately upon the accession of Alexander. Duroc was received with marked distinction, but his presence produced no effect upon the determination of the emperor. Denmark and Sweden unavoidably followed the example of Russia, and the embargo which had been laid on English ships and property was raised, on the 19th of May, in Russia, Sweden, and Denmark: corresponding steps were taken by the English government, and on the 4th of June the embargo which had been laid on the ships of the Baltic in the harbours of Great Britain was taken off, and all the expenses that had been incurred by it, in reference to Danish vessels, was defrayed out of the British treasury. Denmark alone had any just reason to be dissatisfied with these arrangements. She was compelled to submit to the abandonment of those principles for the maintenance of which she had expended so much blood and treasure, and saw herself forsaken by the very power who forced her into that confederation which plunged

her into the war with England. The complaint on the part of Denmark was reasonable ; but the question lay between perseverance in an error, which had already produced enormous losses, and a return to a more sound and permanent system, which secured to all the powers concerned an equal right and protection on the high seas. Denmark must have suffered still more severely by the prolongation of the contest ; and upon the single ground of her own interests, it was more prudent to relinquish a design from which she could not have extracted any benefits equivalent to the injuries it must have entailed.

These measures were followed by the completion of a treaty of alliance, commerce, and navigation, between Russia and Sweden, which had been entered into during the lifetime of Paul, but was not ratified until after his death. Preliminaries of peace were also signed between France and England, and between France and Russia. The independence of the republic of the Ionian Isles, which had been recognised by a treaty between France and Turkey, was guaranteed in this negotiation.

Having established his foreign relations upon a firm basis, Alexander directed his leisure to the consideration of those internal reforms of which Russia stood so much in need. His earliest care was to restore to the nobility the privileges and prerogatives they enjoyed in the reign of Catherine II., and to extend the right of possessing landed property to all the subjects of the empire. The latter measure indicated an inclination to abolish the vassalage of the peasants, but Alexander never proceeded any farther towards the accomplishment of that vast amelioration, appearing rather to recede from such principles, year after year, than to make any advances towards carrying them into effect. It was evident in the opening of his reign, that the impulse of the public mind, heightened by the natural enthusiasm of youth, and the power which at that time the precepts of La Harpe still exercised over his actions, urged him to regard all questions involving popular rights with more

liberality than he ever displayed afterwards. Experience seemed to contract his political vision, and instead of enlarging the civil immunities of the people, he addressed all his social improvements to practical ends. It will derogate nothing from the real good which he bestowed upon his European subjects to observe, that he missed a favourable opportunity for raising them, as far as circumstances would permit, to an equality with the other nations of the continent. He entertained a notion that the Russians were not prepared for liberty, and he drew the evidences of that assumption from their frequent revolutions against despotism, and the vices which slavery had engendered amongst them. But he was insensible to this important truth, that slaves are never prepared for liberty; and that it is necessary to take off their chains in the first instance, before they can be made to appreciate any of those rights which belong to the condition of freemen. He never admitted them to that intermediate state between bondage and citizenship, in which men, barbarous in their origin, may be gradually and safely civilised and educated for the enjoyment of political rights. He found them serfs, and he left them as he found them. Yet he did not pass away without conferring some benefits upon the empire.

Under the government of Paul the clergy, in common with all other classes, were exposed to corporal punishment upon the slightest offences offered to men in power; and it was not unusual to sentence them to the knout, like the meanest criminals, for any freedom of speech they might have used in the discharge of their religious functions. Alexander exempted them wholly from this disgraceful liability. By reopening the vents which his predecessor had closed, he encouraged internal trade and manufactures; and he gave the farmers permission to cut wood in the forests, which was a boon of great value to the agricultural masses. Many acts of clemency also distinguished this early interval of repose; a general amnesty was awarded; all

state prosecutions were stopped ; and a number of exiles were recalled from Siberia. He reduced the rigors of the censorship, and allowed a freer importation of books ; but this concession to the people was so vigilantly watched by a well-organised government, that it scarcely produced any perceptible influence. In his own household, Alexander exhibited an example of judicious economy, by abolishing several useless offices ; and he held out encouragement to the national industry by the establishment of canals, roads, and bridges, in various places. The importance of easy and convenient means of inter-communication cannot be too much dwelt upon in the efforts of a monarch to improve the condition of his subjects. The Romans, whose conquests carried them over so large a surface of the globe, left behind them, wherever they appeared, proofs of the incessant attention they paid to this essential element of domestic prosperity. But Alexander's labours in this way were utterly inadequate to the demands of the empire, and he may be said rather to have shown his sense of the value of such improvements, than to have carried them to an extent capable of yielding any available advantages to the country. The rights of municipalities, which had been arbitrarily swept away in former reigns, were re-established. Military schools, for the support of which a stipulated sum, increased by public contributions, was annually assigned from the treasury ; as well as schools for general education, subjected to the control of the government, were instituted. The universities, some of which were endowed by Alexander, were exempted from the restrictions that were placed upon the schools ; but the members of the colleges were held strictly responsible for their writings. With a view to promote emulation in the several classes, this energetic sovereign revived the two orders that were founded by Catherine, but which Paul had suffered to fall into oblivion — that of St. George for military services ; and St. Vladimir for civil merit. Such were the principal changes in detail which Alex-

ander introduced within the first year after his accession to the throne. But much yet remained to be done. It was in vain to stimulate the people to exertion so long as corruption was festering in the core of the administration, and justice was a dead letter in the state.

The chancery of the secret inquisition, which Catherine II. continued under the softened name of the secret department, and which possessed power over life and death, wielding its enormous and dangerous prerogatives in the dark, irresponsible alike for the conduct of its proceedings, the motives of its members, or the iniquity of its decisions, had inflicted boundless misery on the country. Any individual who happened to provoke the vengeance of a superior, or to stand in the way of his desires or his interests, was liable to be cited before this infamous tribunal, and without, perhaps, being even made acquainted with the crime of which he was accused, to be executed in secret. The constant disappearance of numerous persons, of whom no account was ever afterwards obtained, had long made the unfortunate Russians familiar with the horrors of this system of fatal espionage. Within a few months previously to the death of Paul, no less than twenty-six individuals of rank in the capital disappeared in this way; and the universal sentiment of revenge which these outrages produced, mainly contributed to hasten the catastrophe of the tragedy at the palace of St. Michel. The chancery was abolished by Alexander, who threw open to the public the tribunals at which criminal cases were tried. That was his first great reform, and it was followed by others equally worthy of an enlightened monarch. Previously to his reign, the orders of the cabinet, which were generally of the most arbitrary description, being entirely uncontrolled by any revising authority, unregulated by precedents, and independent of preliminary inquiries, were final, and had the force of law. There was no appeal beyond them, and as they issued upon the mere will of the autocrat or his

creatures, they were necessarily conceived in a tone of despotism, which was in itself injurious to the public morals. For the purpose of removing this source of discontent, Alexander established a permanent council, whose business it was to examine, previously to publication, all ordinances that were to be issued on the affairs of the empire, and he placed the directing senate, which had been instituted by Peter the Great, as a sort of moral mediator between the throne and the people. It is true, that Russia gained but little substantial benefit from this measure; but even the recognition of the theory which associates responsibility with power, is important to a country, however slowly it may be resolved into practice. The administration of public business was still farther improved by a careful distribution of duties, and by attaching distinct liabilities to the servants of the government. To every branch of the administration, a separate minister was assigned, and two new departments—the models of which existed in France—were added, that of the interior, and that of popular instruction. The rights of the senate were defined and guaranteed by law, and the powers of the governors-general were restrained within prescribed limits. Every minister was held responsible for the acts of his department, and was compelled to render to the senate—in which, however, they possessed seats and votes—an annual account of their proceedings. These arrangements, promptly conceived and rapidly executed, formed an auspicious opening of the reign of Alexander.

The negotiations with France, respecting the indem- 1801
nifications in Germany, occupied considerable attention at this period; and it was, perhaps, fortunate for all parties, that Alexander was drawn in to take a part in the settlement of the plan, as, being governed by a strict desire to restore peace to Europe, he was the better disposed to entertain an amicable and conciliatory view of the question. An interview on this subject took place between him and the king of Prussia, in June,

1802 ; and on the 16th of July a convention was concluded by the Russian ambassador at Paris, with the reservation of a complete indemnification for the king of Sardinia and the house of Holstein Oldenburg, for the abolition of the toll at Elsfleth on the Weser.

But while Alexander thus manifested his anxiety to re-establish tranquillity amongst the European states, he did not lose sight of the ancient policy which had invariably been observed by his predecessors, in reference to the east. Whatever might be the justice or moderation of his proceedings in Europe, he pursued with inflexible perseverance, from the first moment of his reign, the same course of duplicity and innovation towards the countries east of the Caucasus, that had always been adopted by the czars. The earliest indication of his views in that direction was the annexation of Georgia to the crown of Russia. That unfortunate country, torn alike by internal factions and the treachery of the allies whose aid she solicited to enable her to recover her independence, had been occupied by Russian troops during the reign of Paul, for the pretended purpose of assisting her against the shah, but in reality to facilitate her incorporation with the empire. Alexander, soon after his accession, undertook to examine the affairs of Georgia, for the avowed purpose of ascertaining whether she could subsist with her former government under the protection of Russia ; but the result of his friendly interference, as might have been expected, was a declaration that the safest course that could be taken was to unite her at once to his own dominions, by which means all her domestic troubles were to be terminated at once. This measure, accompanied by a protest that he was not guided in it by any motives of aggrandisement, but purely for the good of the people, was soon completed, and the liberties of Georgia were swept away by an imperial ukase. This new usurpation was preserved by the presence of strong detachments on the frontiers ; and, in order to furnish the necessary supplies of men, a new recruiting

system was adopted, by which the proportion of the population compelled to serve was considerably increased, and the army was raised to 500,000 men.

It gradually became evident, from the state of the public mind in France, and the progress of Napoleon towards the acquisition of the supreme power, that the relations between the courts of Paris and St. Petersburg were not likely to be permanent ; but no specific causes had yet arisen for producing a rupture which could not be long averted. Alexander, therefore, was enabled to devote his attention, without interruption, to the improvement of the empire, and the extension of its commerce and manufactures. The brief interval of peace was wisely employed. He allotted a portion of land for the introduction of the English system of husbandry ; and, at the solicitation of count Armanzoff, he gave to the landed proprietors who might choose to avail themselves of it, permission to grant, to their vassals, upon giving them their liberty, pieces of land, either by purchase or otherwise, which they might hold as free cultivators. The ports on the Black Sea, especially Odessa, received a new impulse from the encouragement which was extended both to the import and export trade, and they were visited by so many ships from different parts of Europe, that the prosperous times when Greece profited so largely by traffic on this coast appeared about to be revived. The ports of the Baltic also exhibited flourishing returns ; and the trade with China, carried on at the frontier town of Kiachta, participated in the general improvement. A herring fishery was established on the White Sea, under the personal protection of the emperor ; and a voyage round the world, the first that had been originated in Russia, was projected for the purpose of endeavouring to establish the commerce of the Russian American company with eastern Asia, and to open a more extensive intercourse with Japan and China. The expedition consisted of two ships, having on board an ambassador accredited to Japan, and several German professors, with a view to make dis-^{1803.}

coveries in geography and natural history. The latter object was the only one that succeeded. The Japanese government refused to receive the ambassador ; and the ships returned in 1805, without having accomplished any of the important purposes for which the enterprise was undertaken. A slight infringement of the frontier line on the part of Sweden produced a dispute between the courts of Stockholm and St. Petersburg ; which, but for the timely submission of the former, must have led to a war. But the occasion afforded sufficient excuse to the emperor for re-organising the fleet and the army, and putting all the naval and military establishments into motion. The preparations of this great power have always been regarded with jealousy by the rest of Europe, and hence it has taken advantage of the most trivial pretexts for strengthening its means of aggression, since, in times of peace, such movements would be watched and questioned.* The conduct of Napoleon furnished the secret motive for these hostile arrangements. He had guaranteed by convention an indemnity to Sardinia, but he had failed to fulfil it ; and he continued to evade the intercessions of Alexander on behalf of Hanover, which was then overrun by his troops. Rumours also were spread of some disagreement with the court of Berlin ; and such was the impending agitation, that armaments by land and sea were actively proceeding in Russia, France affecting to believe that the object was to recur to the armed neutrality against England, although it was evident to every other power that a very different project was in contemplation. The

* We have seen, however, some instances to the contrary. Two or three years ago, the equipment of a Russian fleet in the Baltic led to a demand for explanations on the part of the English government, which explanations were deemed to be satisfactory. Since that time, however, the fleet was increased from day to day, until at last Russia had a naval armament afloat, consisting of 26 line-of-battle ships, 12 frigates, and a great number of armed craft, with 30,000 sailors — or more properly, half-soldiers half-sailors — ready at a moment's notice for any enterprise, which they might be required to embark in ; yet the English government did not think it necessary to institute any further inquiries into the motives of the emperor. The pretext put forth, was that the ships were fitted out for a review : as if any government would insure such an expenditure for such a purpose. This occurred as lately as December, 1837.

desire for the maintenance of peace which Alexander had shown in the first instance, baffled the calculations of Napoleon, who relied confidently upon the emperor's pacific dispositions ; but as his own ambitious schemes began to be more clearly developed, the policy of Russia took a more explicit and decided form.

The arbitrary proceedings of the first consul were 1804. at last carried to such an extremity, that it was no longer possible for Alexander, in the character which he had assumed, with so much honour to himself, of pacificator amongst the European powers, to remain a passive spectator. Not satisfied with violating the treaties into which he had entered respecting the German indemnifications, Napoleon committed an outrage upon the law of nations, by the arrest and execution of the duke d'Enghein, against which Alexander felt himself imperatively called upon to protest in the most decisive language. The duke d'Enghein, a prince of the house of Bourbon, was regarded with apprehension by Napoleon, as an individual likely, by his personal influence, to embarrass his projects upon the throne ; and although he was residing in retirement in an obscure German town in the electorate of Baden, the first consul did not hesitate to send two detachments of troops across the Rhine at night to seize him, under the pretext of having conspired against the republic. His arrest was rapidly followed by a mock trial, at which no proofs whatever of the accusation were produced, and the trial was as rapidly succeeded by his execution. This infamous act, for which even Napoleon did not attempt to offer any justification, except his right to protect the interests of France by any means in his power, excited universal indignation. But Russia alone was intrepid enough to express the horror it inspired. Alexander at once addressed a spirited remonstrance to the French minister, through M. Oubril, the Russian *chargé d'affaires* at Paris, representing the alarm which such unjustifiable conduct was calculated to diffuse throughout Europe, and concluding with a hope that

the first consul would see the necessity of putting an end to such a state of things. He also addressed a note to the diet at Ratisbon, calling upon the princes of the empire to demand satisfaction for this unparalleled violation of the neutrality of Germany. Nor did the interference of Alexander terminate here. In order to give additional solemnity to his representations and remonstrances, he ordered the court at St. Petersburg, and all his ministers at foreign courts, to go into mourning for the duke d'Enghein ; a measure which, while it testified the deep interest he took in the affair, gave increased offence to Napoleon, who considered it as an evidence of the emperor's attachment to the royal family of France. But these strenuous efforts of Russia to awaken the German states to an energetic vindication of their rights, completely failed of their intended effect. The king of Prussia, whose influence in the north of Germany was paramount, could not be induced to entertain any principle of general policy hostile to the views of Napoleon. The other German princes, fearful of renewing the hostilities with France, tamely submitted to the insult, with the timid avowal of a hope that the first consul would be enabled to give such explanations as would satisfy the expectations of his imperial majesty : and the kings of England and Sweden, as elector of Hanover, and duke of Pomerania, alone supported the generous protest of Alexander. But their votes were outnumbered at the diet, and nothing further was done. The correspondence that ensued between the French and Russian ministers was remarkable for audacity on the part of the former, and for enlightened views and masterly ability on the part of the latter. Napoleon repudiated altogether the right of Alexander to interfere in the concerns of France, alluded to the influence which the enemies of France had acquired in St. Petersburg, and called upon the emperor to act openly, if it was his intention to form a new coalition. These insolent threats and assertions were answered by temperate and firm recapitulations of the wounds which had been faithlessly inflicted upon the

peace of Europe, and fresh demands for redress ; but this angry negotiation produced no other results than the withdrawal of the French ministers from Paris. Under similar circumstances, aggravated by the bitter contempt and personal contumely of Napoleon, the Swedish minister was also recalled. The disagreement between France and Russia led to a difference with the papal court, which Alexander brought to a termination with equal promptitude. The pope, disregarding the expostulations of the emperor, permitted a French emigrant to be arrested in his dominions, in consequence of which Alexander withdrew his ambassador from Rome, and dismissed the pope's nuncio from St. Petersburg.

The assumption of the imperial dignity by Napoleon, which immediately followed upon these events, gave a new interest to the concerns of Europe. As soon as that circumstance was announced at Vienna, the emperor of Germany resolved to confer the hereditary title of emperor upon the house of Austria, for the purpose of preserving the "equality that should subsist between the great powers," and, with the exception of a remonstrance from the king of Sweden, who thought that so serious a change ought to be discussed at the diet, instead of being simply announced by the Austrian ambassador, it was treated with indifference by the other courts, except in so far as it seemed to have been adopted in concert with France. This suspicion was strengthened by a number of circumstances, especially by the jealousy which Austria was known to entertain of the ascendancy which Russia possessed over the councils of the Porte, an ascendancy which Napoleon in vain endeavoured to shake, and of her approach towards Dalmatia by the occupation of Corfu. The dangerous neutrality of Austria in reference to France, and the acquiescence of Prussia, in the new order of things in that country, placed Alexander in a position of considerable difficulty, which was increased by the attempts that were made to incite Turkey into hostilities. The conquests of Russia

on the Persian frontier, her secret agencies in European Turkey, through which she fomented disturbances that enabled her to maintain her influence in that quarter, her unexplained connexion with the Greeks in Albania, and the distribution of 10,000 Russian troops over the Ionian islands, for the ostensible purpose of securing their independence, were circumstances that abundantly justified the insinuations of France; Alexander had evidently adopted one course of policy in Europe, and another in Asia. While he interposed on the one hand for the restoration of the old divisions of the European kingdoms, and the maintenance of the balance of power, he was pushing his conquests eastward, on the other hand, enlarging his territories by unwarrantable aggressions, in pursuance of the hereditary principles of aggrandizement which had never slumbered throughout all the changes of the dynasty, and laying the foundations of a power which, could he have succeeded in establishing it, would have surpassed in magnitude, the greatest empire of the ancient world. It could not be concealed that his movements on the one side, were inconsistent with his professions on the other; and that while Alexander was acting in reference to France, with a magnanimity that excited universal admiration, he was exhibiting a spirit of dexterous machiavellism towards Turkey and Persia. Subsequent events proved that inordinate ambition was the spring of all his proceedings; but Europe was at that time too much engrossed in other affairs, to give much consideration to the concerns of the east.

The breach between France and Russia, but for the neutrality of the German powers, must have eventuated in a war. Alexander, however, unallied with some intermediate state, had not the power of conveying troops sufficient to make any impression on the French territory, and consequently, all views of that nature were abandoned. But the necessity of making preparations for the future, gave him enough of employment at home. Independently of the fleet which he maintained at Corfu, he

fitted out a squadron of three ships of the line, and two frigates, for the Mediterranean; the utmost activity prevailed throughout the arsenals; Sebastopol, on the Black Sea, was declared the first naval sea-port, and merchant vessels were excluded from the harbour; recruits for the navy were raised throughout the provinces, and the military force augmented to half a million of men; and large detachments were assembled on the western frontiers, in the districts that had formerly belonged to Poland. While these armaments were in progress, the commerce of the empire was declared to be in a most prosperous state; tables of the imports and exports were published for the first time, to diffuse confidence amongst the people; and, for the further encouragement of trade and the national manufactures, the duties were reduced twenty-five per cent., in all the ports of the Euxine, and the sea of Azof, and the importation of printed calicoes, of cottons, woven in colours, and printed linens, was prohibited. The censorship of the press was, at the same time, rendered more rigorous and oppressive than ever, accompanied by some soothing common-places upon liberty and the "advancement of real knowledge," which only made its restrictions the more odious and insupportable.

The Ottoman Porte, notwithstanding the efforts of 1805. France to awaken its jealousy of the encroachments of Alexander, was so insensible to the dangers with which the annexation of Georgia to the Russian empire threatened its independence, that it even facilitated the operations of the emperor in that neighbourhood. The Porte granted to Alexander the free navigation of the Phasis, to enable him to convey reinforcements to the Russian corps in Georgia, and was further induced to suffer a detachment of Russians to occupy two forts on the banks of that river to protect the passage. The infatuation of Turkey in allowing ammunition to be landed in its territory, to sustain the war on the Persian frontier, can be accounted for only by the fact that the European powers, not having yet detected the sinister

designs of Russia, or believing Turkey to be incapable of sustaining herself, abandoned her to her own policy, and that she entered into this sort of alliance with Russia as the safest course that seemed to be left open to her. The declarations of Russia were well calculated to lull her fears; for, at the moment when an attempt was making upon Erivan, which could have no other object than that of further acquisition, official articles were published in the St. Petersburg Gazette, setting forth that the government by no means desired an increase of territory, which, especially on the eastern frontier, was without any advantages, and only required greater exertions and sacrifices. By such hypocritical declarations as these the cabinet of St. Petersburg has invariably endeavoured to quiet the alarms of other countries, relying upon the boldness of their assertions for their reception with the world.

The restless genius of Napoleon had no sooner secured the crown of France, than fresh and unexpected schemes were developed for the enslavement of Europe. The acquiescence of the greater number of the courts in his assumption of the imperial title diminished the difficulty of extending his views still farther; and, in violation of the compact by which he had guaranteed the privileges of the Italian republic, he at last effected his long-cherished design of subjugating it in his own person to the crown of France. The most artful measures were devised for giving to this proceeding an appearance of popularity in the disfranchised states, and he was crowned "king of Italy," with extraordinary pomp, at Milan, on the 26th of May. The republic of Genoa, which was not included in this designation, still held the rights which Napoleon had himself conceded to it; but its importance as securing a free passage to the French armies into Italy was too obvious not to lead, in like manner, to the seizure of its liberties. The pliant doge was easily persuaded to solicit Napoleon to take the Genoese under his protection, and on the 4th of June the sacrifice was completed. The whole of Savoy,

Piedmont, and Genoa, was now embraced under the government of France. The previous aspect of affairs had already induced Russia and England to enter into a treaty of concert, which was signed at St. Petersburg, on the 1st of April; and the extinction of the Italian republics vindicated the prudence of that precautionary measure. This treaty, after a general statement to the effect that the situation of Europe demanded a speedy remedy, bound the contracting parties to consult upon the means of redress, without waiting for further encroachments on the part of the French government. Under this view they agreed that the most prompt and effectual course would be to form a league of the states of Europe, and to collect a force which, independently of the succours furnished by England, should amount to 500,000 men, in order either to persuade or compel, according to circumstances, the French government to the re-establishment of peace, and the restoration of the balance of power. The objects proposed were — the evacuation of Hanover and the north of Germany, the re-establishment of the king of Sardinia in Piedmont, the future security of Naples, and the complete evacuation of Italy. The king of England engaged to contribute forces by sea and land, and such subsidies as events might render necessary, and it was further agreed that, in the event of the league being formed, they would not make peace with France without the common consent of all the powers who should become parties to it; but actual hostilities were not contemplated until the attempt to obtain by negotiation the objects of the concerted alliance should have proved abortive. At the moment, however, when a Russian envoy was on his way to Paris, for the purpose of opening a negotiation on the subject, intelligence arrived of the annexation of the Italian republics to the crown of France, and the negotiation was, consequently, broken off. Austria — whose views underwent an entire change in consequence of the usurpations of Napoleon in Italy — immediately became a member to the league, and signed the treaty

on the 9th of August. But such were the pacific sentiments of Alexander, that even at the last he did not wholly abandon the hope of inducing Napoleon to accede to the proposed terms, and, at the request of the Austrian court, he signified his willingness to renew the negotiations as soon as the French government should agree to entertain them; adding, that he would cause two armies of 50,000 men each, to march to the Danube, in order to give weight to the measure, but pledging himself to recal them when the security of Europe should be established. The promptitude of Napoleon placed him in advance of these intentions, and he resolved to concentrate his whole military force without delay, for the purpose of destroying the combination that was forming against him, before the Russian troops had yet passed their own frontier. Not an hour was lost in carrying this energetic resolution into effect; and, towards the end of September, at the head of an army of 40,000 men, he crossed the Rhine into Germany, and opened one of those dazzling campaigns which, for prodigious activity and splendid military talent, have never been equalled in the annals of history. The velocity of Napoleon's movements had already obtained the most signal triumphs before the assistance of Russia could be brought into the field. He had already defeated the Austrians at Wertingen, driven them from Aicha, passed the Danube, and, investing the important fortress of Ulm, to which general Mack had precipitately retreated, completely intercepted the communication of the enemy with Vienna, before the Russians were able to join their ally, except by detached columns, which only arrived in time to witness the conclusion of these alarming disasters. The successes of the French throughout these operations were to be attributed equally to their own skill and energy, and the tardiness, indecision, and want of judgment betrayed by their opponents; while the French divisions made the most admirable and effective distribution of their strength, the Austrians were dispersed in the most unfortunate and useless positions. Another

circumstance also favoured the triumphs of Napoleon Prussia, although she was tacitly engaged in the coalition, had not yet ventured openly to declare for it, and, waiting for events, she observed the utmost circumspection in her proceedings. Acting upon this cautious policy she would not suffer the Russian troops to pass through her territory, which obliged them to take circuitous routes, that caused increased delay in their advance to the succour of the Austrians. Napoleon, however, was less scrupulous than Alexander, and violating without hesitation the neutrality of Prussia, he not only marched his troops through Anspach and Bareuth, but actually occupied those countries, which gave him incalculable advantages in the prosecution of his ulterior plans. This circumstance made an impression upon the court of Berlin, which ultimately determined the wavering policy of the king.

The progress of the French army had now scarcely left time for those defensive arrangements which their formidable victories demanded. Ulm, with a garrison of about 30,000 men, had surrendered; and Napoleon, after ordering the Suabian possessions of the house of Austria to be taken possession of, was already on the road to Vienna. The whole of Bavaria — at first a neutral state, but now become the ally of France — was in his hands. Thus in fifteen days the Austrian army, composed of some of the finest troops in the world, were nearly annihilated. Of 100,000 men they had brought into action, 60,000 were prisoners to the French, and sent to France to replace the conscripts in the labour of the field. * The first column of the Russians that had joined the retreating Austrians, did not increase the total allied army to more than 45,000 men, and this inadequate force was posted at Brannan on the Inn to repel Napoleon who was approaching to contest the passage. It was soon evident, however, that their situation was hopeless; and the allies, abandoning their military stores,

* See State Paper — Buonaparte's Proclamation.

retired in the direction of Vienna. Pursued step by step, they suffered a variety of reverses, and were not only forced from every position they took up, but had the mortification to see their means of communication with the army of the archduke in the Venetian territories completely cut off, and their ranks daily thinned by severe losses. The able manœuvres of the French threw the Austrian capital into a state of great consternation and confusion, and the allied army, resolved to make a desperate stand, ascended the heights of Amstettin as the last hope of saving Vienna. Here they were attacked by the cavalry of Murat, and Oudinot's grenadiers; and, although they repelled them several times, they were at last obliged to retire with a loss of 400 killed and 1200 prisoners. The loss of the French on this occasion was also considerable. Forced to retreat, and encamped within thirty miles of Vienna, the emperor Francis admitted, with reluctance, the necessity of suing for peace, and on the night of the 7th November despatched proposals to Napoleon for an armistice of a few weeks as a preliminary step to a general pacification. Napoleon expressed his willingness to accede to the armistice on condition that the Russians should instantly return home, that the Hungarian levy should be disbanded, and the duchy of Venice and the passes of the Tyrol should be occupied by French troops. Contenting himself with this reply, which he knew could not be agreed to, he continued his plan of operations. The emperor Francis finding all his means insufficient to the defence of his capital, retired with his court to Brunn in Moravia, and the principal nobility fled from Vienna into Hungary. The capital now lay open to Napoleon; and the magistracy sent a deputation to him to implore his clemency for the unfortunate inhabitants, who, they observed, were not the cause of the war. It is worthy of remark that general Mack when he capitulated at Ulm, made use of a similar argument to deprecate the wrath of the conqueror, stating that the emperor of Germany did not wish for a war, but was compelled to it by the Russians.

The answer of Napoleon to the deputation was, as usual, curt and conclusive. He simply informed them that the inhabitants of Vienna must take care not to open their gates to the Austrians or Russians, but only to the French army. There is no doubt that the Austrians were tired of the war, and that the people of Vienna were not so much disinclined as might have been supposed, to receive the French, hoping that hostilities might thus be brought to a speedy conclusion. The supplies pressed hard upon them, and the currency had suffered a dangerous depreciation. They had also cause of complaint against the Russian troops, whose love of pillage and barbarous conduct had produced universal discontent; and it was not, therefore, very surprising that Napoleon was permitted to enter the city, and to occupy the imperial palace of Schoenbrun without the slightest attempt at resistance. A vast quantity of ammunition and valuable military stores were found in Vienna, and appropriated by Napoleon.

The Russians, who had now gathered in Moravia, opened a vigorous attack upon the French troops who were dispatched in pursuit of them. The loss on this occasion was large at the French side, but without any corresponding advantages to the Russians, who were compelled to fall back upon Brunn; but such was the promptitude of Napoleon, who had, by this time, possession of nearly the whole of the Austrian artillery, that they had scarcely gained this position when the French cavalry, falling on their rear, forced them to abandon their ground. The Russian general finding himself hard pressed, had recourse to a *ruse* to gain time for a more effective retreat. Exhibiting a flag of truce, he demanded leave to capitulate, and separate from the Austrians. But Napoleon, suspecting the sincerity of the proposal, refused to accept it, and ordered his troops to advance. In the engagement that ensued the Russians were completely routed, and the approach of night alone terminated the slaughter. On the part of the Russians the loss was 2000 killed and as many wounded, with 12

pieces of cannon, and many baggage waggons : — on that of the French, upwards of 3000 killed and wounded. With enormous difficulty, and exposed to skirmishes as they retreated, the allies succeeded in taking up a position between Wishau and Olmutz, and in a few days the French established their lines in front of them. A general and decisive action seemed to be resolved upon at both sides.

During the period occupied by these events, Alexander was not inattentive to the responsibilities he had undertaken. Fresh levies were made in Russia, and forwarded to reinforce the allies ; and Alexander set out to join the army in person, repairing, in the first instance, to Berlin, in the hope of inducing the king of Prussia to co-operate in the common cause. The meeting of the two monarchs was productive of reciprocal expressions of friendship ; and before the tomb of Frederic II. they mutually pledged themselves to an inviolable union. On November 18, Alexander joined the emperor of Germany at Olmutz, on the day when the second Russian army, under Buxhovden, had reached the camp. A fruitless attempt at negotiation was made by the allies, who were certainly not in a condition to risk the result of a general action ; but Napoleon, confident of his advantages, was resolved to bring the destinies of Europe, which appeared to tremble on the fortunes of the day, to issue on the field. The respective forces, at this juncture, were thus estimated : — the total allied army amounted to about 72,000 men — the Russians, commanded by general Kutosoff, and the Austrians by prince John of Lichtenstein, but the infantry of the latter were, for the most part, raw recruits that had not been embodied more than a month ; the French force was about 75,000 strong, but they were troops flushed with victory and incalculably superior to their antagonists in military skill, ardour, and discipline.

When Napoleon heard that the emperor Alexander had arrived to join the army, he despatched one of his *aides-de-camp*, M. Savary (afterwards duke of Rovigo),

with a letter to compliment him. In the interview which followed between M. Savary and the emperor, the latter said, "I duly appreciate the proceeding of your master ; it is with regret that I have armed against him, and I shall seize with great pleasure the first opportunity of giving him that assurance. He has long been the object of my admiration." Having prepared an answer to Napoleon's letter, he held it with the address turned downwards during the conversation, and at the close, he handed it to M. Savary, observing, "Here is my answer ; the address does not express the title he has of late assumed. I attach no importance to such trifles." The address was, "To the chief of the French government." When Napoleon received the emperor's letter, he became unusually thoughtful. The observation of Mack, that Russia had urged Austria into the war, and a rumour which had reached him of the intention of Prussia to join the coalition, induced him to hesitate, as to the course he should take. At length he despatched M. Savary to propose a personal interview with the emperor ; but Alexander sent prince Dolgorouki in his stead. The result was unsatisfactory at both sides, and immediate preparations were made for the battle.

The plan of attack decided upon by the allies was formed with an imperfect knowledge of the enemy's position, and Napoleon, having discovered their intentions, made his preparations to defeat them. It was supposed by the allies that the French centre had been weakened to support its left, and as their position outflanked the right of the French, they resolved to make an attempt to turn the French right, by which they might be enabled to continue the contest in the plains beyond, thus escaping some defiles which it was believed covered their front. At the dawn of day, Napoleon collected his generals on a height commanding a view of the movements of the allies, and when the sun appeared above the horizon, he issued his last orders. The action immediately began on the left wing of the allies, the French remaining on the defensive. The circuitous route which the

allies were obliged to take, in order to complete their plan, had the effect of separating their left so completely from their centre, that Napoleon, adroitly availing himself of the opportunity, put his massive columns into motion, to cut off the left wing, which still continued to advance for the purpose of turning a position which the French army, in fact, did not occupy. The allied centre had been reduced by the diversion of the troops to 12,000 men, while the French, who poured in to insulate it, was nearly double that number. Notwithstanding this disaster, however, the emperor Alexander, as was originally settled, prepared to advance. The action had now become general, with various success in different points of the field. But the main interest of the battle gradually centered on the heights of Pratzen, which formed the key to the position the allies had just occupied, and upon the possession of which the ultimate fate of the day depended. The conflict on this spot assumed a most sanguinary character, and was conducted on both sides with obstinate valour. Kutosoff, who commanded the position, perceiving that the French were advancing in great force, commenced the attack; but the Russians opened their fire at too great a distance, while the French, moving steadily forward, did not fire until they came within an hundred paces of the enemy. The effect was decisive; the destruction which the musketry of the French committed upon the columns of the allies compelled them to retire, and the French marched rapidly to the summits.

The allies, sensible of the great importance of the heights, made several desperate efforts to dislodge the enemy, but the vigilance and ability of the French generals repulsed them at every charge. At last, the compact body of the allied force advanced to force the position at the point of the bayonet, but the steady and incessant fire of the French produced such a carnage in their ranks that they were forced to retreat. The French, now, in turn, became the assailants. The allies, absolutely abandoned by their left wing, in vain met the shocks of their vic-

torious and enthusiastic enemy, and at last were thrown into utter confusion. It was now evident that the fate of the engagement was decided.

While these reverses were befalling the allies on one part of the field, the right wing was totally put to flight by the infantry of Lannes and Murat's cavalry ; and at nightfall took the road to Austerlitz, followed by the scattered remnants of the army. The victory was now complete, and is renowned, under the name of the battle of Austerlitz, as one of the greatest of Napoleon's achievements. By this disastrous engagement the allied forces were diminished more than a fourth, besides having lost nearly all the artillery they brought into the action, and the whole of their baggage.*

On the 3d of December, the day following the battle, prince John of Lichtenstein was charged with a message from the emperor of Germany to Napoleon, soliciting an interview ; and it was arranged to take place on the following morning. At nine o'clock, on the 4th, the two emperors met in the open air, near a mill, within three leagues of Austerlitz. Napoleon, who was first on the ground, caused two fires to be lighted, one at each side of the road, and when the emperor Francis arrived, in a landau, Napoleon went to meet him, embracing him when they met. The sovereigns, accompanied respectively by prince John of Lichtenstein and marshal Berthier, occupied one fire ; and the gentlemen of their suite stood round the other. At about 200 paces distant the French horse-guards were drawn up in order of battle, and opposite to them an escort of Hungarian cavalry. The conference lasted upwards of an hour, and the result was an agreement upon conditions dictated by Napoleon. General Savary was appointed to accompany an Austrian general to communicate the issue to Alexander, who was then at Göding. The terms of the agreement were, that the French were to keep possession of

* Previously to 1806, the Russian infantry used to place their knapsacks on the ground before they began to fire ; so that when they were forced to retreat precipitately, they were obliged to leave them behind.

all their conquests in Moravia and Hungary, Upper and Lower Austria, the Tyrol, the state of Vienna, Carinthia, Styria, Carniola, Goritz, Istria, Bohemia, and the circle of Montabar, with the whole of the country to the eastward from Tabor to Lintz; and that they were to hold this immense tract until the conclusion of a definitive peace, or the rupture of the negotiations. It was further stipulated that the Russians should evacuate the Austrian states within fifteen days, and Galicia within a month. When these terms were communicated to the emperor Alexander, he did not formally object to them, because he was not in a condition to resist; but, without making any decisive answer either way, he ordered a retreat, and on the 6th December he was on his way to St. Petersburg. Alexander has been accused of having acted with duplicity on this occasion; with having affected to entertain the proposal only to gain time for the escape of his army; and with having deceived Davoust, who hung upon his retreat, by sending to him, to say that an armistice was concluded, leaving him to suppose that he was embraced in it, even before the armistice had been arranged. These charges are true; but Alexander had entered into the war to assist his ally, and he held himself justified, whether rightly or not is another question, in retiring from it by any means that he could, without adopting the humiliating conditions that were forced upon Austria.

This campaign was in the last degree unfortunate for the allies. Russia especially suffered by it in her resources and her reputation. France alone gained, and her gain in power, dominion, and renown, was almost incalculable.

CHAP. IX.

TREATY OF PRESEURG. — INDECISION OF PRUSSIA. — TREATY BETWEEN PRUSSIA AND FRANCE. — OVERTHROW OF THE NEAPOLITAN DYNASTY. — A RUSSIAN MINISTER SIGNS A TREATY AT PARIS, WHICH ALEXANDER REFUSES TO RATIFY. — AGGRESSIONS UPON TURKEY. — HOSTILITIES RENEWED BY THE ALLIES IN POLAND. — MOHRINGEN. — BERGFRIED. — DEPPEN. — HOFF. — BATTLE OF EYLAU. — NAPOLEON MAKES OVERTURES FOR PEACE, WHICH ARE REJECTED. — THE FRENCH RETIRE ON THE VISTULA. — POSITION OF BOTH ARMIES. — ENGLAND REFUSES SUCCOURS. — SUSPICIOUS INCONSISTENCY OF ALEXANDER. — CAPITULATION OF DANTZIC. — SITUATION OF NAPOLEON. — NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE REOPENED. — INEXPLICABLE CONDUCT OF THE RUSSIANS. — THE ALLIES RESUME THE OFFENSIVE. — THEY RETIRE UPON THE ALLA. — THE STRONG POSITION OF HEILSBERG IS ABANDONED BY THE RUSSIANS. — NAPOLEON ADVANCES TO EYLAU. — DISASTROUS BATTLE OF FRIEDLAND. — FLIGHT OF THE ALLIES TO THE MEINEN. — KÖNIGSBERG IS ENTERED BY THE FRENCH. — SINISTER POLICY OF ALEXANDER. — ARMISTICE PROPOSED BY THE RUSSIANS. — MEETING OF THE SOVEREIGNS. — TREATY OF TILSIT.

By the treaty of Presburg, founded upon the armistice at 1806. Austerlitz, and signed, on the 26th of December, 1805, between France and Austria, the latter power lost her old Venetian states, which were annexed to the kingdom of Italy ; and was obliged to surrender the Tyrol and the country of Saltsburg to Bavaria, with some possessions in Suabia and the Brisgau to the grand duke of Tuscany. It was also determined, by this treaty, that the electors of Bavaria and Würtemberg should be raised to the dignity of kings, and the margrave of Baden to that of grand duke. The settlement of a peace with Austria, and the withdrawal of the Russians from the scene of contest, placed Prussia in a situation of considerable embarrassment. She had resolved to remain neutral in the

war, and, in pursuance of that line of policy, had not merely refused permission to Alexander to march through his territories, but had declared that the passage of the French troops through Anspach and Bareuth was a breach of her neutrality. Yet, although she had thus given France reason to believe that she had no intention of joining the coalition, she subsequently acceded to the proposals of Russia, and pledged herself secretly to the cause of the allies. So entirely did Alexander feel himself bound to Prussia by this understanding, that when the campaign was over he placed the Russian troops at the disposal of Frederic, in consideration of having drawn him into the league, stating, at the same time, that his majesty was at liberty to consider the alliance dissolved, if he thought fit. The error which Frederic committed was made apparent, and the means he adopted for remedying it were marked by the same incapacity and irresolution that had previously presided over his infatuated councils. It would almost seem that he hoped to deceive the allies and the French into the belief that he was friendly to them both—a preposterous design which Napoleon fathomed, when he said to the Prussian minister, “You wish to be the allies of all the world: that is not possible; you must choose between them and me.” The armistice between France and Austria brought the affairs of Prussia to a crisis, and it was imperative to decide one way or the other. The country was at the mercy of Napoleon, who, by a few marches, might have overturned the monarchy; and in this emergency M. Haugwitz, the Prussian minister who had been sent to negotiate with Napoleon, signed a definitive treaty at Vienna, by which Prussia, from having been the friend of the coalesced powers, became at once the ally of France, and a participator in the spoils of the vanquished coalition. This treaty guaranteed to France the possessions surrendered by Austria; and, in lieu of three provinces* which were ceded to France, Hanover

* Anspach and Bareuth in Franconia, Cleves in Westphalia, and Neufchâtel and Valengin in Switzerland.

was annexed to Prussia. At the moment when this disgraceful convention was agreed to, Prussia enjoyed the full confidence of the courts of St. James's and St. Petersburg; and so gross a breach of faith—especially to England, whose sovereign rights in Hanover were thus ceded away by an enemy and accepted by an ally—might reasonably be supposed to be attributable solely to the corruption of the minister, and not to the faithlessness of his master. But this slender escape is not left for the honour of Frederic. The treaty was not only adopted but acted upon at Berlin, with this saving point, that it was resolved to defer the completion of it until a general peace should be agreed to, and the consent of the king of England obtained, and that the French troops should not be permitted to return to Hanover. With these alterations the treaty was forwarded to Paris; and under the pretext of preserving Hanover from another ruinous war, that electorate was immediately occupied by Prussian troops, the ulterior design of annexing it to Prussia being however carefully concealed from the English ambassador at Berlin. But these insidious and vacillating measures excited the indignation of Napoleon, who at once declared the treaty to be annulled, because it had not received an unconditional ratification. The result was, that Prussia was compelled to throw off the mask, and adopt unhesitatingly the prescribed terms. A treaty was consequently ratified at Paris on the 15th of February, by which Prussia became bound to annex Hanover to her dominions, and to exclude the British shipping from the ports of the electorate. These measures were carried into effect without loss of time: and, on the 1st of April, a patent was issued, under the authority of Frederic, formally annexing Hanover to Prussia, on pretence that, belonging to the emperor Napoleon “by right of conquest,” it had been transferred to Prussia, “in consideration of the cession of three of her provinces to France.” Such was the termination of these extraordinary transactions. Whatever way the events that led to this result may be regarded, the weakness and treachery

of Frederic admit of no palliation. His conduct to the allies covers his name with indelible disgrace.

Immediately after the peace of Presburg, Napoleon received intelligence of the appearance of a squadron of English and Russian ships of war in the bay of Naples, and of the landing of an armed force consisting of 14,000 Russians, and 10,000 English, in the neighbourhood of the city. This movement was evidently either preconcerted with the Neapolitan government, which was bound in a treaty of neutrality to France, or was afterwards approved of by it, as active preparations for hostilities were commenced as soon as the troops were established on shore. The precise object of this rash expedition never transpired; and, unless it sprang from the desire of Russia to secure a preponderating influence in the south of Italy, it is impossible to account for it upon any rational grounds. Napoleon no sooner heard of this new diversion of the war, than he issued a proclamation declaring that "the Neapolitan dynasty had ceased to reign," and sent a powerful force, under the command of his brother Joseph, to reduce the whole kingdom. The advance of these troops dispelled the dreams of the Neapolitans. The court was broken up, and fled in consternation to Palermo; the allied armies retreated to their ships; and the mysterious drama was closed by the coronation of Joseph Bonaparte as king of Naples. At the same time, to complete the splendours of his imperial career, Napoleon determined upon substituting a monarchical for an elective form of government in Holland, and conferred the crown of that kingdom upon his brother Louis. Thus, within the space of a few months, he had annexed Italy to the crown of France, overrun the whole of Austria, stripped Prussia of three provinces, given away the electorate of Hanover, driven the Russians back to their inhospitable snows, and created three new kings in Europe, besides raising two electors to the regal dignity.

The alliance which subsisted between England and

Russia in reference to the attainment of a general peace, precluded either party from entering into a separate peace, or consulting its own interests without consideration of the interests of the other. Mr. Fox acted strictly upon this principle, and refused to entertain the overtures for peace which were made by M. Talleyrand, unless they were fully acceded to by Russia. But M. D'Oubril, the Russian plenipotentiary at Paris, was less scrupulous, and signed a treaty with France on the part of Russia on the 20th of July, by which, amongst other articles, the independence of the Ottoman Porte was guaranteed at both sides, but no stipulation whatever were made respecting Sicily, which formed the *questio vexata* between France and England. It is difficult to believe that M. D'Oubril would have ventured to sign such a treaty if he did not conceive himself authorised to do so; but, however that may be, the emperor of Russia refused to ratify it, and M. D'Oubril was disgraced and exiled from court. The lightness of his punishment appears to justify a doubt as to whether M. D'Oubril had departed so far from his instructions as the imputation would seem to imply: but the truth appears to be that the whole time occupied in the negotiations between the two courts—no less a period than eight months—was filled up on the part of Russia with a series of deceptions to gain time, and enable Prussia to make preparations for war, to which step her unhappy genius impelled her as the only means left for recovering from her degradation. The sacrifice of a public servant was a trivial affair in comparison with the ulterior objects in contemplation. In the October following, Prussia, relying upon the assistance of Russia, but without waiting until the forces of its ally were organised, entered the field single-handed against Napoleon. The result was, that within a month from the commencement of hostilities, the king of Prussia was compelled to fly across the Oder; his army, consisting of 150,000, under the command of the incapable duke of Brunswick, was almost anni-

hilated. Berlin was entered in triumph by the French, and the Prussian monarchy might be said to have ceased to exist. These signal misfortunes were consummated before the Russian troops reached Warsaw, where three divisions formed a junction, in the vain hope of staying the impetuous career of the victorious enemy. But the intelligence of the approach of Napoleon determined them to retreat; and, repassing the Vistula, they continued their retrograde movement beyond the Narew. At last, fixing their head-quarters at Pultusk, they ventured to give battle on the 26th of December, and were utterly routed with the enormous loss of 12,000 men, killed, wounded, and prisoners; 1200 baggage carts, 80 pieces of cannon, and all their ammunition waggons. Complete, however, as this engagement was in its immediate result, an official statement was inserted in the St. Petersburg Gazette, and industriously circulated throughout Europe, claiming the victory for the Russians, and representing the effective strength of the French army to be considerably reduced, not merely by losses in the field, but by diseases, that were asserted to be making a frightful havoc in their camp. The object of this gross misrepresentation was to restore confidence throughout the kingdoms that were groaning under the spreading despotism of Napoleon. But the shallow artifice was soon exposed.

While the attention of Europe was concentrated upon these events, Russia was engaged on the eastern side in an unprovoked aggression upon Turkey, which was not only unwarranted by any ground of quarrel, but was calculated to awaken the jealousy of those powers who had looked to the independence of the Ottoman Porte as a barrier against the dangerous extension of the Russian dominions. The affairs of Europe were so deranged by the interference and conquests of Napoleon, that a more unfortunate moment could not have been chosen for this wanton invasion; but it was that very state of things which recommended the enter-

prise to Alexander. Towards the end of November, a Russian army of 60,000 men penetrated into Moldavia, and before the conclusion of the year occupied the whole of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bessarabia. It was evidently the interest of the coalesced powers, instead of pursuing individual objects, to combine their whole forces against France; but Russia, with that total disregard of treaties and pledges which has always distinguished her proceedings, seized upon the moment when her assistance was most needed to prosecute her ambitious designs in the east. On this occasion, she exhibited even less circumspection than usual. She did not even pretend to mask her project under the disguise of necessity or violated faith, or colourable circumstances of any kind. It was an open infringement of the rights which she had herself guaranteed to Turkey, and which, for territorial aggrandisement alone, she now treated with contempt. The French minister at Constantinople had been tampering with the fears of the sultan, and under an impression that the treaty signed by M. D'Oubril, which recognised the full independence of his empire would be ratified, had induced him to displace some of the Moldavian hospodars, and appoint others in their stead, without consulting the Russian resident*; but that weak and timid prince had no sooner discovered that the treaty was rejected by Alexander, than he recalled the appointments, and removed any excuse for hostilities that might have been extracted from that circumstance: and all this was over and finally adjusted before the invasion took place. The situation of Turkey at this juncture was more alarming than at any former period, and if the councils of France had not been guided by so energetic a mind

* A convention was agreed upon between Turkey and Russia, in 1805, by which it was settled that the Hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia should continue in office for seven years, and should on no account be removed from their appointments, without the concurrence of the Russian minister resident at Constantinople. This humiliating stipulation was forced upon Turkey for the secret purpose of enabling Russia to establish her interests in those provinces, through the functionaries who were thus placed there, as it were, under her protection.

as that of Napoleon, it is extremely probable that Russia would have accomplished her destruction. The divan was distracted by the opposite factions of France and England, the ministers of which countries were alternately threatening to take their leave if their advice were not implicitly adopted; Egypt was in a state of anarchy; Mecca, Medina, and Bagdad, were revolted and independent; the Janissaries, discontented with the introduction of European tactics, were ripe for an excuse to conspire against the government; while a Russian army on the Danube, a French army in Dalmatia, and an English fleet within sight of the Dardanelles, perplexed and stultified the sultan, who, whichever way he decided, could hardly fail to risk the safety of his dominions. In this perilous strait he applied to Napoleon for assistance, after having for a long time resisted the temptations that were put before him to renounce his friendship for Russia and Eng-
1807. land; but Napoleon's forces were engaged in other quarters, and the only help he could render the Porte was to send some engineers to Constantinople, to enable him to fortify the capital. In the meanwhile war was proclaimed against Russia, and her ships were excluded from the Dardanelles. These proceedings, forced upon the impotent sultan by the treachery of Russia, awakened the vigilance of England, who perceived that her interests were compromised in this new alliance with France, and an English fleet was immediately sent to Constantinople, with instructions [to demand an explanation; and, if necessary, to proceed to extremities. At this crisis, such was the universal indignation which the perfidious conduct of Russia had excited, and which was naturally transferred in part to the English, that Mr. Arbuthnot, the British ambassador, would have been sacrificed to the fury of the people if he had not succeeded in effecting his escape; and the fleet was forced to make its way through the Dardanelles under the fire of the towers at each side. After a fruitless negotiation, during which the English

admiral in vain endeavoured to bring matters to a satisfactory issue, he was at last compelled to depart, in consequence of the vigorous defences that were preparing on shore, and the hopelessness of his position in those narrow straits. Immediately after the departure of the English fleet, a Russian squadron blockaded the Dardanelles, and, defeating the Turks in two naval engagements, took possession of the Isle of Lemnos, and conquered Tenedos, thus cutting off from Constantinople the sources of some of its usual and most productive supplies. Such was the situation of the belligerents, when the war between France and Russia drawing to a close, released Turkey from her impending danger. In the settlement of the peace of Tilsit, Napoleon stipulated for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Wallachia and Moldavia, and the cessation of hostilities, which was recognised by an armistice between Russia and the Ottoman Porte, on the 24th of August. Alexander was bribed by the spoliation of some of his European allies, for foregoing his meditated spoils in Turkey.

The peace of Tilsit was the most remarkable event, on many accounts, that occurred from the first manifesto of the allied powers against France; in its results it changed the entire current of European policy. The circumstances by which it was preceded, while they suggested to Napoleon sufficient reasons for desiring to bring hostilities to a conclusion, were of a nature, on the other hand, to justify the prosecution of hostilities on the part of Alexander, had he been sincere in his professions of a desire to restore the old kingdoms and divisions of the continent.

After the battle of Pultusk, the Russians, with whom the Prussians were united, continued to harass the French in their winter quarters on the Vistula; and on the 25th of January an action took place at Mohringen. The issue was not decisive either way, both armies, after a severe conflict, finally withdrawing from the

field.* At the bridge of Bergfried, at Deppen, and Hoff, (the Russians prudently adopting the plan of retreating on the Pregel before a superior numerical force, fighting all the way with invincible valour,) the ground was contested in gallant actions, with such varied successes at both sides, that they may be considered as drawn battles. But it was impossible that such sanguinary episodes could be long permitted to interrupt the eventful progress of the main drama. The French had already driven back the Russians as far as Eylau, and there the combined army resolved to make a stand. A general and decisive engagement appeared to be mutually determined upon. The Russians were in possession of the village of Eylau, which, being an important point, was assailed by the French the day before the battle, and carried after a desperate resistance and considerable loss on both sides. On the following morning, the 8th of February, the Russians commenced the action by a cannonade on the village. While this attack was going forward, Napoleon ordered a cannonade against an eminence in possession of the Russians, which commanded the entrance to the plain, and which was essential to the offensive operations of his army. The opposing forces were within half gun-shot distance of each other, and, every shot taking effect, the carnage that ensued was terrific. In the midst of these movements a sudden and dense fall of snow, accompanied by a mist that continued for half an hour, involved both armies in comparative darkness. They could not see beyond the length of their bayonets; and some of the French columns, inclining too much to the left, wandered about until they were completely separated from each other. This must have proved fatal to the French, but for the masterly manœuvres of the cavalry under Murat, and

* Both the French and the Russians claimed the victory in their bulletins. According to the Russian accounts, the French lost 1000 men in killed and wounded; and according to the French accounts, the Russians left 1200 dead upon the field. But it is certain that the Russians did not fall back when the action was over, more than six or seven miles, while the French retired to a distance of sixty miles from Mohringen.

the impetuosity with which Davoust, falling upon the rear of the Russians, dislodged them from the eminence they had maintained with so much obstinacy. The Russians, after exhibiting unexampled proofs of valour during a fight of twelve hours, retreated from the field, leaving behind them their wounded and their cannon. In this, as in other instances, both sides claimed the victory; and it would be difficult to decide to which the honour of that sanguinary triumph, where so much blood was spilled for so little purpose, properly belonged. It is true that the French remained in possession of the field; but it is also true that, instead of following up their fortunes at Königsberg, as they intended, to which place the Russians had retired, and the towers of which were actually in sight, they remained at Eylau for eight days to bury the dead, and made overtures of peace to general Beningsen, which were rejected by that officer, with the emphatic answer, that "his master had sent him to fight, and not to negotiate." The intrepidity displayed by the Russians in this battle gave the severest check to Napoleon which he had received since the commencement of his career, and laid the foundation of the disasters that crowded so rapidly upon his subsequent life. If it were, indeed, a victory, it was a victory which in its results was more unfortunate than an ordinary defeat. The loss of the Russians in this engagement was 7000 men left dead upon the field—that of the French could not have been much less, but being greatly exaggerated in some accounts, and underrated in others, it is impossible to arrive at the accurate estimate of its amount. It was a remarkable circumstance in this memorable engagement, that the battle was fought almost exclusively by the artillery and cavalry, the infantry having been scarcely brought into action throughout the day. The spectacle which the field presented on the following morning was sickening to the survivors. Within a square league, 9000 or 10,000 dead bodies, upwards of 4000 horses, whole lines of Russian knapsacks, shattered fragments of

artillery, howitzer shells, broken muskets and sabres, and twenty-four pieces of cannon, with their drivers, killed in the act of attempting to carry them off, lay upon the snow.

That the result of this battle shook the confidence of Napoleon, who, perhaps, began to fear that he had moved too rapidly without securing an open line of communication in his rear, was evinced in the desire which he betrayed to negotiate a peace with the Russians and their ally. He was not unprepared, however, for the abrupt refusal of Beningsen to receive his overtures; and, as if he had anticipated such a result, he instructed Bertrand, who conveyed the offer, to proceed at once, in the event of a rejection by the Russian general, to the king of Prussia, who was then at Memel. But the misfortunes which Frederick William had suffered in consequence of his former indecision, counselled him upon this occasion to act with more firmness, and he dismissed Bertrand with an explicit declaration that he would not sign any treaty of peace without the entire concurrence of the emperor of Russia. The negotiations, therefore, rested between Alexander and Napoleon, in whose hands the destinies of the greater part of Europe were now unconditionally placed. It was not difficult to foresee, under these circumstances, of what nature that arrangement would be which should satisfy the demands of two such arbitrators; nor was it very surprising, upon a subsequent occasion, when personal intercourse had more fully developed their mutual sentiments, that they should have proposed to divide the whole of Europe between themselves.

The Russians, profiting by the advantages they had derived from their perseverance in harassing the French troops, even at a great numerical loss, continued to act upon the same system; and, while the French yet lay at Eylau, a squadron of cossacks rescued 3000 prisoners, at a distance of fifteen or twenty leagues from the field. On the 16th of February, a large detachment of the Russians advanced against the town of Ostrolenka,

from which, however, after three distinct charges, in the course of which they penetrated half way into the streets, they were finally repulsed. On the following day, a regular engagement took place, in the plains beyond, in which the Russians were again forced to give way, with a considerable sacrifice, and were pursued for upwards of three leagues, fighting, like Parthians, the whole way. But in these affairs, although the Russian army suffered more severely than the French, the diversions they occasioned were much more injurious to their opponents.

The grand object, which it now became necessary for Napoleon to accomplish, was to cover the line of the Vistula, upon which he retired on the 19th of February, and to reduce the Prussian fortresses on that river, from whence dangerous operations were to be apprehended in his rear, should it become advisable again to advance into Poland. The most important of these enterprises, was the siege of Dantzic. The attempts of the Russians to divert him from this purpose only added fresh failures to those they had already suffered. At Braunsburg and Peterswalde, two Russian detachments were severally defeated; and, all their efforts to embarrass his arrangements being completely frustrated, Napoleon at last found leisure to mature his plans for the blockade.

But, unlike his opponents, who were strangely negligent in providing against reverses of fortune, Napoleon applied to the French nation for twelve regiments of conscripts, to be sent to the theatre of war, six months before the period fixed by the constitution for their enrolment; and to stimulate the zeal and enthusiasm of the people, he published a statement of the cannon that had been taken from the enemy since their arrival on the Vistula, amounting in the whole to 176 pieces. Such incontestable vouchers of his glory were the strongest arguments that could be employed to sustain the ardour of France. The remainder of the winter was occupied, accordingly, in extensive preparations; and on the night of the 2d of April, the trenches of Dantzic were opened, a force of between 30,000 and 40,000 men having been brought to bear upon the town,

which held a garrison of 12,000 Prussians, and 6000 Russians, the whole under the command of the Prussian general Kalkreuth. At the same time another force of 3000 was employed upon the reduction of Grand-euz * ; and the grand French army took up its position in the form of a semicircle, encompassing both places. In addition to the main army, there was another force of considerable strength under Jerome Bonaparte, in Silesia, and an army of observation in Pomerania, which was estimated at 80,000 men. The Russian and Prussian forces lay nearly opposite to the French, stretching along the right bank of the Passarge, and extending over Heilsberg, Bartentstein, and Schippenbell. Platow, the hetman of the cossacks, who commanded the left wing, pushed his advanced detachments so close upon the enemy, that even in occupying their positions, several irregular actions took place. Along every other point of the lines, there was a tacit armistice. The posts of the hostile armies being thus established throughout the surrounding districts, and sweeping nearly round Dantzic, the siege may be said to have taken place under their eyes.

The activity which Napoleon exhibited in repairing the losses of the campaign, compelled the allies into greater exertions than usual, but, unfortunately, with even less than their usual success. In Russia it has always been extremely difficult to raise levies with promptitude, in consequence of the vast extent of territory over which the troops are scattered, the want of means of transport on so large a scale, and the danger which is incurred by moving masses of soldiers out of those remote territories, which, acquired by fraud or violence, can be maintained only by the constant presence of a military force.† In addition to these general causes,

* The forces employed upon these sieges consisted chiefly of Poles, Hessians, and Badenese, and other troops of the confederation of the Rhine, to the undying disgrace of Germany, who thus sent forth her sons in one army, to act against her sons in another. Napoleon, as if he were not quite sure of their fidelity, completely surrounded them by the disposition of his lines, which thus *kept them to their work*.

† Russia occupied two years in preparations for the last war with Turkey, and could raise in the end only 120,000 men for the invading army,

the late wars had pressed hard upon the serviceable classes of the population ; and left behind but scanty resources to draw upon. On the other hand, Prussia had already put forward nearly all its strength in its own defence, and, although the king in his desire to make some atonement for the blind and selfish policy that had reduced him to such extremities, animated and encouraged his subjects by the firmness he now began to display, the result was entirely inadequate to the demands of the occasion. If the heroism of the king of Sweden — recalling by its romantic gallantry, the most generous qualities of Charles XII.—could have brought substantial assistance to the struggling allies, these deficiencies would have been readily supplied, but his means were in the inverse ratio to his desires. Alexander had all along calculated with confidence upon co-operation from England, both in the way of a subsidy and an army ; and the plan of operations that was determined upon in that event, was that the English auxiliaries should join the Swedes, and make a formidable diversion in the rear of the French, which might ultimately enable them to take Stattin, open a communication with Berlin, the Elbe, and the rest of Germany,

and 80,000 for the army of observation, cantoned in Lithuania. The difference between the military force which a country is able to raise, and that which it can actually bring into the field, is sometimes enormous. Count Bismark, who lately went to Russia, on an invitation from the emperor, to see the army, reports that his imperial majesty can at any time bring upwards of 300,000 men, with 500 pieces of cannon, into a field of battle. But "he forgets on this occasion," observes colonel Mitchell, in his "Thoughts on Tactics and Military Organisation," "that to parade thousands in good home-quarters, and to parade them on a distant battle-field, are altogether different things." The contingencies that reduce an army upon its march, ought always to be taken into account, when the scene of hostilities is remote, and especially when the intermediate countries are poor and inhospitable. Napoleon, for instance, according to the marquis de Chambery, (*Philosophie de la Guerre*) entered Russia with an army of 613,000, and in less than four months it was diminished to 120,000. This is one of the arguments that are sometimes employed to show that a Russian invasion of India is impracticable. But with the exception of that unavoidable waste of life which must thin the ranks of all armies on their progress, the general assertion is less applicable to Russia than to any other country in the world. In whatever direction she moves — either to the east, the south, or the west — she moves at an advantage, leaving her frozen wilds and perpetual marshes behind, and penetrating, at every step, into milder and more genial climates.

and force the French to evacuate Poland. This plan, even if it were accomplished only in part, could not fail to have been of the utmost importance, in preventing the enemy from concentrating his strength on the points threatened by his formidable line. Applications, however, for troops, were made in vain to England, who, foreseeing that she was likely to find employment for all the physical means she could command, withheld the solicited succours, but granted a subsidy of 500,000*l*. This proceeding, on the part of England, deeply offended Alexander, who gave vent to his resentment upon the first opportunity that offered. But nothing could be more unreasonable, contradictory, and unjust, than the view which Alexander took of the policy of the British government at this juncture. The exculpation of England from the imputation of defection to her allies did not rest upon any argument of expediency, but upon the plain recital of facts. Threatened by Napoleon with a descent upon her own shores, which was averted only by the invasion of Germany, England exercised no more than a necessary circumspection in watching her insular position with vigilance, and in refusing to enter the field upon any ground, separate from the great common cause, in which she had embarked all her energies, and to which she had contributed so largely. The peace of Presburg settled the disputes with Austria, and the treaty of Vienna, by which Prussia betrayed the interests of England, and in a spirit at once dastardly and fraudulent purchased her own safety, by the usurpation of the possessions of her ally, effectually decided the differences of that country with France. If Prussia subsequently discovered in the treaty, which her mingled weakness and cupidity had tempted her to sign, so much matter for repentance, as to make her risk a second war in its violation — a war, in which she could not secure the sympathy of Europe, since it was undertaken solely to rescue herself from the disagreeable necessity of fulfilling a humiliating pledge — no just cause of complaint attached to

England, because she declined to engage in a side-quarrel of such doubtful complexion. But Alexander stood in a different relation to the unlucky Frederic. It was he who had urged him into hostilities — who had fanned the reluctant flame of national pride in his heart — and who, even when the Austrian standards swept the dust before the feet of Napoleon, and the French eagles fluttered over spoliated Italy and the Venetian states, had seduced him, by the offer of fresh reinforcements, into the vindication of his rights, at the sacrifice of his honour. England, on the contrary, had been aggrieved by the duplicity of Prussia in taking possession of Hanover, under false pretensions, and would have been justified by the law of nations in making reprisals; in consideration, however, of the higher importance of the great principles at issue on the continent, she bore her own wrong with dignified patience, knowing that a united front was essential to the success of the cause, in which almost every kingdom in Europe was engaged, and that any dissensions amongst the opponents of France would be fatal to their interests. But in reviewing the conduct of England in reference to these circumstances, it is impossible not to be struck by the extraordinary contrast it presents to that of Alexander, who was so chagrined by her reserve. Alexander, dropping the character of pacificator, with which he opened his career, became, at last, the principal fomenter of the war; and carried his zeal to such lengths, that even when Austria submitted to a peace, he refused to be a party to it, and withdrew the remnant of his troops out of Moravia. That campaign was scarcely terminated, when Prussia, acting under his counsel, resumed the offensive, and Alexander, with as much rapidity as circumstances would admit, sent three divisions, all that he could bring into the field, to Warsaw, and from that point, contested every foot of ground to the banks of the Pregel, beyond which his troops were finally obliged to retire. The winter producing a cessation of hostilities, the interval was occupied in vigour-

ous preparations for the spring campaign ; and in the month of April we find the contending armies encamped almost in parallel lines, opposite to each other, and awaiting the commencement of a fresh, and, according to appearances, a still more sanguinary struggle than any of those by which it had been preceded. Yet, after this vast expenditure of national resources, — after all the calamities, which devastating war — the blight of smiling harvests, the paralysis of industry, the canker that eats into the myriad-life of kingdoms — had inflicted upon some of the finest countries in the world, Alexander, who urged the war to the height of its fury, and was not to be appeased until it had spread its fires from the Tyrol to the Baltic, was the first potentate to abandon the objects for which it was commenced. But we are not yet sufficiently removed from the period when these events took place, to render full justice to the reflections they suggest. It will be for posterity to extract the moral that ripens in our forbearance.

On the 28th of March, the emperor Alexander, accompanied by count Tolstoy, set out from St. Petersburg to join the army. He was received by the king of Prussia on the frontiers, and they proceeded together to Königsberg. In a few days afterwards the archduke Constantine arrived at that place with a reinforcement of 30,000 men, consisting chiefly of the Russian imperial guard. But in the mean while, the siege of Dantzic was proceeding with great vigour and resolution ; the trenches had been opened ; all the necessary artillery had come up ; and the bombardment had already commenced. The garrison made frequent sorties, and some battalions, issuing from their fortifications, rushed upon the French of the third parallel. But in these courageous efforts against a superior force, the besieged acted at an evident disadvantage. They had no means of supplying the losses to which each fresh charge exposed them, while the besiegers could at all times obtain reinforcements from the main body of the army. The situation of Dantzic was, consequently, considered to be so dan-

gerous, that a council of war, at which the king of Prussia and the archduke Constantine assisted, was held for the purpose of deliberating upon the measures it would be advisable to adopt for the relief of the city. Two plans were proposed. The first was to force the Passarge, which divided the principal strength of the two grand armies, attack the French lines, and hazard the results of a general engagement, which, if successful, would oblige the French to raise the siege. The second was, to throw succours into Dantzic by sea. A rigid examination of their means satisfied the allies that they were not in a condition to draw the French, whose position was fortified at all the assailable points by works constructed with consummate skill, into a decisive action, which would probably terminate in the defeat and dispersion of the troops they had brought together with such difficulty; and they therefore resolved to attempt the plan of relieving the place by a maritime expedition, at the same time diverting the attention of the enemy by several feints at different intervals along their chain of posts. Although in the circumstances in which they were placed, it was scarcely possible to have made any great movement likely to be crowned with important successes; yet the project of approaching the besieged city by water, considering how it was inclosed on three sides by the French, and how ineffective any operations of that sort must have proved, was the worst that could have been devised. The navigation both of the Vistula and the canal of Dantzic, was completely intercepted by the batteries that were thrown up by the besiegers; and the space between the fort of Weischelmunde (which was in the possession of the Prussians), and the walls of the city, a distance of two or three miles, was entirely occupied by the French, so that they commanded all the avenues of communication which it was necessary to traverse before the city could be relieved. Notwithstanding these discouragements, however, the Russian lieutenant-general, Kamenskoy, in pursuance of the plan laid down, embarked at Pillau with two Russian divisions,

which he landed on the 10th of May under the protection of the guns of fort Weischelmunde. At the same moment the reserve of the French army, in anticipation of this proceeding, advanced from Marienburg under marshal Lasnes to reinforce marshal Le Febvre; and brigadier general Schraum made preparations on the ground between the fort and the city to resist the further progress of Kamenskoy. By two o'clock on the morning of the 15th, general Schraum disposed his troops in order of battle, and shortly afterwards Kamenskoy moved forward his battalions from the fort in three columns, with the intention of penetrating to the town along the right bank of the Vistula. An action immediately took place, in which the Russians, being superior in number, would have been successful, but that marshal Le Febvre despatched two regiments to the assistance of general Schraum, and the troops charged with the defence of the right bank, pressed forward to the spot, while Lasnes, who covered the left bank, crossed the river, and after a fierce engagement, which lasted for two hours, the Russians were repulsed with immense loss, and driven back to the palisadoes. One column, which, with characteristic obstinacy, would neither yield nor fly, was, to a man, put to the bayonet. During the progress of these movements, the other manœuvres that had been settled upon were put into execution without any more fortunate results. The Russian commander-in-chief was no sooner assured that Kamenskoy had effected his landing than he began to reconnoitre and alarm the whole of the French line from the Passarge to the Alla, but he was met every where at the mouth of the musket by flying voltigeurs, who, hovering round the approaching troops, committed such slaughter in their ranks as to compel them to retreat precipitately.*

* The voltigeurs, who were sharpshooters or marksmen mounted on horseback, were an invention of Napoleon's, the idea of which was suggested by the Parthians, who, wheeling round and round the Roman legions, poured in upon them showers of arrows, against which they possessed no protection, except their shields, which, in such a case, were nearly useless. The duty of the voltigeurs, was to harrass the enemy by hovering round them, and seizing favourable opportunities to fire in amongst them.

At Malga, Wildenberg, Dreuzewa, and the mouth of the Bug, the Russians opened a simultaneous attack, but at each place they were beaten back, and the rafts which they had formed on the Bug, and which occupied six weeks in preparation, were burned by the French in two hours. These disasters disclosed so fully to the garrison at Dantzic the hopelessness of their circumstances, that, on the 19th of May, general Kalkreuth demanded an honourable capitulation, which it was considered advisable to grant, and on the 27th, the garrison, with general Kalkreuth at its head, marched out with the honours of war. This fine body of troops, originally 18,000 strong, was now reduced to 9000, and presented a painful spectacle to the eyes of the victors. By this capitulation, the whole of the artillery and magazines of Dantzic were given up to the French. General Kamenskoy was obliged to witness this proceeding passively from the fortifications of Weischelmunde, but, hearing that the enemy intended to burn his ships, he hastily put out to sea and returned to Pillau. The fort was immediately summoned by marshal Le Febvre, and, while the terms were under consideration, the garrison advanced and surrendered at discretion. The commandant, thus deserted by his troops, took refuge in a frigate, and saved himself by flight.

From the moment that the fall of Dantzic was announced, the conduct of the war on the part of Russia, and the entire policy of Alexander towards Napoleon underwent an inexplicable change, which, up to the present time, has never been satisfactorily explained. We can arrive at an estimate of that sovereign's motives only by a review of the results to which these events led so unexpectedly; and when we compare the relative circumstances in which France and the allies were placed at the conclusion of the siege, it is impossible to relieve the character of the autocrat from the charge of perfidy to which it was exposed by his subsequent proceedings. The levies which Napoleon made in France had exhausted that country, and had already begun to

produce universal murmurs amongst the people. The embarrassments of his position after the battle of Eylau generated a belief that he could not prosecute the campaign any farther with advantage; and when the last conscription was called for, such was the reluctance with which the demand was acquiesced in, that it was found necessary to qualify the grant by a clause that the new levy was then only to be organised, and to be retained within the limits of the empire as a national guard. A thousand expedients were resorted to for the purpose of artificially stimulating the martial enthusiasm of the populace: *fêtes* were given more frequently than ever, to dazzle the imagination of the uneasy multitude, and unusual splendour distinguished the gaities of the court. But all these arts failed to kindle popular ardour, which languished under repeated drains on the national industry. The gradual evacuation of Swedish Pomerania, the rapid successes of the Swedish general Van Essen, and the chivalric resolution manifested all throughout by Gustavus, helped to reduce still lower the drooping spirits of the French; and it was no longer possible to conceal the fact that no more troops could be raised in France under any pretext, or upon any emergency whatever. Within a period of seven months these different conscriptions had taken place; the flower of the population was swept away; and the blanks that had thus been occasioned in thousands of families, the domestic grief that followed, and the feelings of desolation, amounting almost to despair, with which the continuance of the war with Prussia was regarded, presented insuperable impediments to any farther measures for increasing the effective force on the scene of hostilities. These circumstances were well known to Napoleon. His consciousness of the difficulty in which they involved him induced him to offer the proposals at Eylau, and had all along made him desirous of terminating hostilities. These circumstances were also known to Alexander, and in proportion as they increased the perplexities of the French they must obviously have diminished the obstacles

to victory on the path of the allies. The course of the allies, therefore, was clear. The overtures they had rejected before, they had additional reasons for rejecting now; and if their resistance to the assumptions of Napoleon were so firm as to make them keep the field against a combination of adverse occurrences, it ought to have maintained them there, now that adversity was beginning to set in at the other side. Yet, with the most mysterious wilfulness the Russians suffered their advantages to escape through their hands, and at last permitted Napoleon, in the very ebb of his fortunes, to conclude the war to the utter ruin of Prussia, and with fresh accessions to himself of that sort of glory which was most likely to restore the confidence, by flattering the vanity, of the French nation. His anxiety for peace had been betrayed in a variety of ways during the entire period of the recent military operations. He interdicted correspondence of every description with France, to prevent the allies from ascertaining the true state of public feeling; and he availed himself of all such opportunities as could be judiciously embraced for impressing upon his adversaries his desire for a permanent settlement of their differences with him. Soon after the battle of Jena, a proposition was exchanged between the belligerents for a congress of all the powers, with a view to a general pacification: and it is probable that it would then have been carried into effect but for the persevering refusal of Alexander to admit the Ottoman Porte into the deliberations. Engrossed by his designs on Constantinople, he would not consent to extend to Turkey any of the benefits that might flow from a participation in the proposed convention. Napoleon, on the other hand, aware of the objects of Russia in that direction, and of the overwhelming accession of power she would obtain by their fulfilment, insisted upon the admission of the grand-signior as the friend and ally of France, and offered as a countervailing weight to consent to the introduction of England as the ally of Russia. The basis of the negotiation laid down by Napoleon was

equality and reciprocity, and a system of compensations. There is scarcely any doubt that this proposal for a pacific settlement of the affairs of Europe was postponed from time to time in consequence of the indisposition of Alexander to entertain the subject in congress with the grand-signior ; for there could not exist on the part of Napoleon any motives for desiring to delay its accomplishment. On the contrary, so strong was his wish to carry it into effect that, as we have seen, he renewed his offers to enter upon negotiations immediately after the battle of Eylau ; and, notwithstanding the sturdy negative of general Beningsen, and the still more conclusive reply of the king of Prussia, who deferred to Alexander the right of deciding upon the treaty, Napoleon again recurred to the subject as soon as Dantzic had surrendered. But upon this occasion, to avoid circumlocution, and avert the possibility of delay or misunderstanding, he made a direct proposition to the emperor of Russia, for the revival of the question of a general pacification, and accompanied it by an explicit declaration that he desired peace above all things, and that he was willing to receive any reasonable overtures to that end which might be made to him. There was no ground upon which the sincerity of this declaration could be questioned. He stood apparently upon a prouder eminence than at any previous period of the war. With Dantzic in his possession—the great bulwark of the Vistula—with his army powerfully reinforced by recent levies of Poles and Swiss, by the withdrawal of his troops out of Silesia, by the raising of the siege of Colberg, and the union with the main body of the detachments, more than 30,000 strong, that had been engaged in the reduction of Dantzic, and, holding a commanding position, won by a progress of uninterrupted victories, from the Elbe to the Oder, and from the Oder to the Passarge, he was in a situation to treat with advantage, and to return to Paris covered with triumphs : while, on the other hand, the checks he had received at Pultusk, and during the whole of the advance

to Eylau, which proved to him the uncertain issue of a protracted campaign with such enemies, the apprehension of a dangerous diversion in his rear on the banks of the Oder from Stralsund to Frankfort, and the knowledge of the hopelessness of any further assistance from France, urged him strongly to avail himself of so favourable a moment to bring hostilities to a conclusion.

Every conceivable motive that could enter into the question, even the superiority of his army and the posts it occupied, recommended peace to Napoleon ; and he was so intent upon effecting the negotiations, that instead of continuing the campaign, and striking terror into the enemy by the celerity of his motions, as he had hitherto done, he determined as long as he could to remain on the defensive. He accordingly prepared to make Dantzic his head-quarters, appointed general Rapp governor, created le Febvre duke of Dantzic, reviewed the troops, and distributed gratuities amongst the soldiers who had been engaged in the siege. All this time the negociations were secretly carried on between him and Alexander ; but the nature of these negotiations, and the causes that determined the ensuing proceedings of the Russian army, remain an impenetrable mystery.

It was sufficiently clear, even to those who were at a distance from the scene, that, after the fall of Dantzic, and the addition which it made to the French forces by the liberation of so large a body of troops, the security of the allies demanded that they should retire behind the Pregel to their former position, supporting their right on Königsberg, where they would be nearer to their resources, and the French would be drawn further away from theirs ; but, instead of adopting this plan—the only one that promised any solid hopes of success—they opened an attack on the French lines on the 5th of June, fifteen days after the capitulation of Dantzic. That such an injudicious movement could not lead to any other issue than a series of defeats, must have been foreseen by general Beningsen, who commanded the Russian army in chief ; and the only rational explana-

tion of which his conduct admits is, that these defeats were voluntarily incurred, with a view to give a colour of expediency and necessity to the ultimate pacification. Three attacks were made on the same day at three different points—the *tête du pont* of Spanden on the Passarge, the *tête du pont* of Lomitten, and the right wing of the French line, under marshal Ney at Aldkirken, Gutstadt, and Wolfsdorf. In the three actions the loss of the Russians was immense, while that of the French was comparatively trifling; and in the former two the allies were repulsed; while in the latter marshal Ney, after a severe conflict, fell back in good order on Ackendorf. The attack was renewed in the centre of the lines on the following day, with no better success, the Russians still losing in a proportion of nearly ten to one more than the French. In consequence of these hostilities, Napoleon, leaving the camp at Finckinstein, joined marshal Ney at Deppen, and took the command of the army in person. On the 8th a portion of the troops, marching to Wolfsdorf, fell in with the division of Kamenskoy on its way to rejoin the main body, and, attacking it vigorously, put it to the rout. At the same time Napoleon advanced towards Gutstadt. A part of the rear-guard of the Russian army, about 25,000 strong, which had taken up a position at Glottaw, attempted to dispute his passage; but was finally driven from its ground, with a loss of 1000 prisoners, and a great number of killed and wounded. The operations of the French army now became offensive in turn; and upon their progress from Gutstadt to Heilsberg they seized several of the enemy's camps. Overtaking, on the 10th, a considerable division of the allies consisting of about 17,000 cavalry, and several lines of infantry, they attacked them with a strong force of dragoons, cuirassiers, and light cavalry, but were repeatedly repulsed. The Russians were now in front of the town of Heilsberg, where the main army lay surrounded by fortifications, and reinforcements were hourly sent to their assistance; but by a skilful dispersion

of the assailants to the right and left, they were ultimately driven from their positions, and at night-fall the French, in the ardour of victory, pursued them to the very ridges of their entrenchments.

The position which the Russian army occupied at Heilsberg was the strongest they had taken throughout the campaign. It was almost impregnable by nature, and was still further strengthened by the continuous labours of four months. They had succeeded in tempting Napoleon to advance from the banks of the Vistula to the ground on which it would seem they had themselves chosen to decide the issue of the war, and which was, in all respects, the most advantageous to them for a general engagement. The whole of their army, with all its magazines, was assembled at Heilsberg; and if they had been in earnest in renewing hostilities, they could not have selected a more favourable opportunity for bringing them to a decision. Napoleon was so confident that such was the intention of the allies, that he devoted the entire day of the 11th to the necessary preparations for a battle. He gathered all his troops upon this spot, with the exception of the first corps which was left to manœuvre on the lower Passarge; and he assigned to each regiment its proper station in the field. By an adroit disposition of the left wing of marshal Davoust's division, he pushed farther down upon the Alla, and completely blocked up the road to Eylau. It was expected that the Russians would issue from their intrenchments on the 11th; and, as if to confirm the anticipation, they appeared drawn up in regular columns behind their redoubts, covered by the frowning batteries. But as night drew on they gradually broke up: at ten o'clock they began to pass the Alla in tumultuous groups; and before the dawn of day the whole army had vanished from its strong-hold, leaving all its magazines and its wounded to fall into the hands of the conqueror. This precipitate retreat was so irreconcilable with the previous tactics of the Russian general, which were censurable for their haste and rashness, that it excited universal

astonishment from one end of Europe to another. At any other juncture, a Russian officer who had thus betrayed an important trust committed to his charge, and fled under the shelter of the night from a post which yielded him such extraordinary advantages over the enemy, would have been disgraced, and sent to Siberia. Even so recently as the capitulation of Dantzic, several Russian officers deserted in preference, as they declared, to risking a sentence of exile to the mines: so inevitably do such punishments follow in the Russian army, even upon the most justifiable exercise of discretion in cases of real necessity. But no such rigorous measure was reserved for general Beningsen. His defection was passed over in silence, as if it were either altogether unavoidable, or actually a stroke of masterly skill.

So rapid and complete was the evacuation of Heilsberg, that at four o'clock on the morning of the 12th the French entered the place in triumph, and took possession of the rich granaries and provisions, the magazines and munitions, which the Russians had so strangely abandoned. Several corps were despatched to pursue and intercept the allies, and cut off their communication with Königsberg; and on the afternoon of the same day the head-quarters of the victorious troops, for whom a miraculous fortune appeared to prepare the most unexpected ovations wherever their eagles floated, were fixed at Eylau. A great change had taken place in this region since they had last been encamped on its broad fields. Instead of a dreary waste of ice and snow over which the fires of their melancholy bivouac gleamed with a lurid light that gave increased horrors to the scene, the reviving summer had spread an exquisite picture of fertility. But the clustering woods, the tranquil pastures, and orderly villages that animated the scene, were destined to be despoiled by the crushing footsteps of legions who, spreading ruin on their track, looked upon such sights with admiration only as they presented the means for sustenance, and a favourable ground for military operations.

It is worthy of observation, that there is not a single instance upon record in which Napoleon is known to have expressed any immediate sympathy either with the beautiful in nature which his thronging columns destroyed, or the suffering population whom they scared from their peaceful retreats. Yet such reflections are always forced by such events upon minds less accustomed to dwell upon the details of war, and less dazzled by the equivocal glory of victories so dearly purchased.

Napoleon had no sooner arrived at Eylau than he despatched a division of the army under Marshal Soult to manœuvre before Königsberg, and advanced in person towards Friedland, a town on the left banks of the Alle, in pursuit of the allies who had taken that direction. On the 13th, General Beningsen arrived on the right bank opposite the town, where the stream was spanned by a long wooden bridge. By an ingenious stratagem, Napoleon attempted to draw the enemy over to the left bank, where he possessed decided advantages for the disposition of his troops, and where the Russians, in the event of a general engagement, would be placed under the necessity of defiling through the town and over the narrow bridge, which would render retreat almost impracticable. At first he allowed only a small part of his force to be seen, which deceived the Russians into the belief that the French troops consisted chiefly of a division which had suffered severely at Heilsberg. Under this impression Beningsen ordered one corps to cross the bridge, and, finding no serious opposition, he reinforced the first division with a second, and gradually transported the whole of his army over the river by means of the bridge and three pontoons. He had no sooner accomplished this movement than he discovered his mistake: heavy columns of infantry began to emerge from a thick wood, in which they had hitherto been concealed; the cannons of the French were rapidly advanced into position; and accumulating evidences at length satisfied him that, instead of having to encounter, as he imagined, only a fragment of the grand army,

nearly its entire strength was now before him. But it was too late to correct his error ; it was impossible to effect a retreat, and there was no alternative but to give battle on the ground he had so precipitately taken up. While hasty arrangements were making at both sides to form the troops in order, several skirmishes occurred, which, however, appeared to have no other effect than to stimulate the general impatience for the approaching contest. The left wing of the Russians rested on the town of Friedland, and the right extended a mile and a half in the opposite direction. The whole line was a continued plain, intersected by a deep ravine of water which separated the right wing from the centre. In the extreme distance, about a mile and a half from Friedland, the plain was fringed by a wood on elevated ground, forming nearly a semicircle ; and at that point the right wing of the French was placed under marshal Ney : the remainder of the French line lay in front of the allies, and a battery of 30 cannon was erected in their centre. The attack was opened by Napoleon, who, aware of the perilous situation of the enemy, although they were drawn up in the best order that circumstances permitted, concentrated his operations upon the town. With that view, suddenly changing his front, he ordered the right wing to advance, while another division, sword in hand, pressed onwards in a direct line towards the steeple of Friedland. The broken and woody country which they occupied enabled them to conduct their operations at pleasure, while the Russians were so limited in space, and so exposed by their situation, that they had nothing to rely upon but their indomitable courage. Marshal Ney had scarcely advanced out of the wood, when the Russians endeavoured to surround him with a cloud of cossacks ; but a division of dragoons coming to his assistance, the design was frustrated. While this movement was going forward at the wing, the battery in the centre was quickly advanced 400 paces, and played with murderous effect upon the Russian centre. But the advance of Ney, who was gaining rapidly upon the town,

compelled general Beningsen to gather his forces from all the quarters where they could be spared upon that point. As Ney's division swept along, several columns that attempted to intercept him were received on the point of the bayonet, and driven into the river, where thousands perished; and at last he reached the raveline that surrounded Friedland. An ambush of imperial guards which had been placed there rushed upon him as he approached, and for a brief interval his columns, thus suddenly assailed, wavered and fell back; but, being immediately re-inforced, they ultimately bore down their opponents. A dreadful struggle now ensued, Several corps arrived in tumultuous succession from different parts of the field to defend the entrance of the town, upon the preservation of which the last hope of the allies depended: but the impetuosity of the French was irresistible; and the Russians, dislodged from all their positions, at last fled in confusion into the streets, and crowded the bridge and pontoons, while the shouts of their pursuers thundered in their rear. By the most desperate valour, and fighting at the point of the bayonet, to the very edge of the river, the residue of the Russian army succeeded in escaping to the opposite bank, some by the bridge and pontoons, and others by a ford close to the town, which they fortunately discovered at the moment of their flight. They then set fire to the bridge, and the smoke, rising in dark volumes over the scene of carnage, enhanced the horrors of a spectacle, which for the great number of the dead and dying who strewed the limited space, was one of the most revolting in the annals of Europe.

The French did not abandon the pursuit until eleven o'clock; and throughout the night they were in motion, endeavouring to cut off the retreat of the straggling columns that had not been able to pass the Alla. As soon as the day-light broke, the river presented a picture that showed the consternation in which the retreat was effected. Covered waggons, baggage-carts, cannon, harness, and accoutrements, were floating on the stream;

and some of the disabled soldiers, who had concealed themselves in the darkness under the cover of some obscure walls, and plunged into the water upon the approach of dawn, yet lingered in their agony, clinging to the shattered wrecks that drifted them from the shore.

On the morning of the 15th the remains of the Russian army re-assembled in great disorder, on the right bank of the Alla, and, retiring on the Pregel, passed that river the next day, and continued their retreat to the Niemen. They adopted the precaution of destroying the bridges wherever they passed, to prevent pursuit. In the meanwhile Napoleon advanced to the Pregel, where he took up his position, and entered Königsberg, which, after the battle of Friedland, had become untenable, where he found 20,000 wounded Russians and Prussians, 160,000 muskets, and all the ammunition that had been sent to the Russians from England.

This campaign had lasted ten days. "It was on the 5th June," observed the French bulletin, "that the enemy renewed hostilities. Their loss in the ten days that followed their first operations may be reckoned at 60,000 men, killed, wounded, taken, or otherwise put *hors de combat*. They have lost a part of their artillery, almost all their ammunition, and the whole of their magazines on a line of more than 40 leagues. The French armies have seldom obtained such great advantages with so little loss." The French estimated their own loss at about 1200 killed, and about 5000 or 6000 wounded, but that account is evidently improbable. Yet, it is remarkable that general Beningsen, who, after the battle of Eylau, made such false representations of the loss he had sustained, estimating it considerably under the fact, while, in an equal degree, he over-rated the loss of the enemy, did not make any attempt, upon this occasion, to conceal the real situation of affairs; but, on the contrary, sullenly acquiesced in the result, and declared, as his deliberate opinion, that any further attempt to resist the progress of the French, would be, at that time, utterly hopeless.

A case was made out at both sides against the allies, and it seemed to be mutually agreed that the time was come when hostilities ought to cease. It must be admitted that the evidence was framed with consummate tact, and that the extraordinary reverses which attended the Russians in their hot campaign of ten days, led, by very natural and apparently unavoidable steps, to a suspension of their operations. But the palpable want of judgment they betrayed in the moment and the place they selected for the renewal of the contest, their needless and profuse expenditure of blood, under circumstances that did not open to them the least possible chances of success, their perseverance in a desultory and fruitless march of skirmishes, by which they wasted the resources that they ought to have husbanded for a decisive battle ; and, above all, their extraordinary abandonment of Heilsberg, the most powerful and favourable position they had secured during the whole period of the war in Poland, are circumstances which must always, in the opinions of military men, cast a deep shadow of suspicion on their motives, alike dishonourable to them as allies and as soldiers. According to the most impartial accounts, the French commenced the campaign with 160,000, including all their troops of every description, stationed between the Oder and the Alla ; while the allies possessed a force of 100,000 effective men, besides Cossacks, and other irregular auxiliaries. The disproportion was not so great as to justify the results, had both armies observed corresponding promptitude in their movements, or had the allies acted with ordinary prudence. But a secret disinclination to promote the objects of the war, and turn it into other channels, had for some time been growing up in the mind of Alexander. He had become dissatisfied with his allies, who were exhausted and unfortunate ; and new dreams of aggrandizement visited his imagination in the prospect of an union with Napoleon, the Colossus whose gigantic limbs were stretched over half the world. To this end, these unaccountable disasters pointed ; and to accom-

plish this perfidious purpose, he did not hesitate to sacrifice tens of thousands of his subjects, to give to the consummation of his treachery the sad grace of a reluctant necessity.

The grand duke of Berg, at the head of a division of the French cavalry, pursued the Russians as far as the Niemen, which they crossed in precipitation, burning the bridge of Tilsit, and continuing their retreat eastward. The emperor of Russia and the king of Prussia had rested at Tilsit during this campaign, but the approach of the French troops compelled them hastily to abandon that place, which was entered by Napoleon on the 19th of June. On the same day, an armistice was proposed by general Beningsen to the chiefs of the French army; which was agreed to by Napoleon on the 22nd.

The war was now concluded, and the last act that remained to be performed was the ratification of peace. An interview between Alexander and Napoleon was arranged, and a raft for that purpose, covered with sumptuous tents, was moored in the Niemen. The meeting took place on the 25th of June, and, ascending at the same moment from their boats, the emperors mutually embraced. Napoleon was attended by Murat, Berthier, Bessieres, Duroc, and Caulaincourt; and Alexander by his brother, the grand-duke Constantine, generals Beningsen and Ouwarrow, and the count Lieven. Both banks were crowded with thousands of spectators, intermixed with the soldiers, who had come to witness this grand catastrophe, which placed the fate of Europe in the hands of its most ambitious potentates; and shouts of joy rent the skies as the two monarchs entered the gorgeous pavilion that had been prepared for their reception. The conference lasted two hours: the officers remaining outside while the conditions of the treaty were discussed within. In order to give more *éclat* to the sudden friendship that had sprung up between the imperial antagonists, half the town of Tilsit was declared neutral, and was occupied by Alexander, his body-guards,

and the individuals of his household. A series of brilliant festivities followed, in which Napoleon exerted himself to the utmost to flatter the vanity of Alexander, and Alexander took pains, upon all occasions, to exhibit publicly his friendship for Napoleon. The anecdotes with which the memoirs of the day are filled, of their familiarity, their interchange of compliments, and their extravagant declarations of reciprocal regard, present a strange contradiction to the enmity that appeared so recently to have animated both.* On the 28th of June, the humiliated king of Prussia arrived at Tilsit, and was presented to his conqueror, who treated him, during his stay at this place, as a secondary person, deserted by fortune, and delivered, stripped and bound, into the hands of his enemies. The treaty was signed between France and Russia on the 7th, and between France and Prussia on the 9th, of July.

In November 1806, the emperor Alexander, who was then inflamed with enthusiasm in the prosecution of the war against France, employed a remarkable expression, which is on record under his own hand:—"I will do my utmost," he declared, "that the Prussian dominions may not lose even a single village." The shortest and most emphatic commentary upon the sincerity of that declaration is the fact that, in July 1807, he not only signed away one half of the Prussian states, by which the king of Prussia lost an immense territory, nearly the half of his revenues, and upwards of 5,000,000 of his subjects, but incorporated a part of the Prussian dominions with his own empire, by which Russia gained an accession of country containing a population of

* On one occasion Alexander is said to have addressed Napoleon with the following verse:—

"L'amitié d'un grand homme est un présent des dieux."

No expressions of admiration appeared too fulsome for this imperial farce. At another time, Napoleon said to Alexander, "Your majesty is the handsomest man I have ever seen!" But it would appear that the youthful spirit of Alexander at last revolted from this sickening glare of insincerity. He was one night at a ball, during this interval of revelry, when Napoleon observed loud enough to be overheard "How well the emperor dances:" shortly afterwards he retired to a seat, and amused himself beating time, when Alexander approached, and sarcastically remarked "How ill your majesty beats time!"

200,000 souls. This act of treachery was the more memorable from the peculiar circumstances under which the treaty of Tilsit was drawn up. The contest between Russia and France did not relate to any direct interests of their own, but exclusively to those of their respective allies ; and there was, therefore, nothing properly to be adjusted between them, on their own account, beyond the establishment of peace and amity. The duty of Alexander, at this crisis, was to obtain such reasonable and equitable terms for his unfortunate ally as the extension of his friendship to Napoleon warranted him in demanding ; but the despots had no sooner met in conference, than all past pledges were forgotten, and their whole attention was directed to the advancement of objects, as fraudulent as they were selfish.

The articles of the treaty of Tilsit confirmed all the conquests and usurpations of Napoleon, — the very innovations upon the tranquillity and territorial divisions of Europe, against which Alexander had maintained such a devastating war. By this treaty, the emperor of Russia acknowledged the confederation of the Rhine, which was strengthened by the creation of the new kingdom of Westphalia, consisting partly of provinces, taken from Prussia, on the left bank of the Elbe ; he further acknowledged Jerome Bonaparte as king of Westphalia, and engaged to recognize any increase of territory, which Napoleon might afterwards think proper to annex to that kingdom ; he also acknowledged Joseph Bonaparte as king of Naples ; and Louis Bonaparte as king of Holland, ceding to him at the same time, his right of sovereignty over the lordship of Jever in Friesland. The dukes of Saxe Coburg, Oldenburgh, and Mecklenburgh Schwerin, German princes in alliance with Russia, were, on the other hand, reinstated in the complete and quiet possession of their estates, the ports of the duchy of Oldenburgh remaining in the possession of French garrisons until a definitive treaty of peace should be concluded with England ; for the accomplishment of which the mediation of the emperor of Russia was accepted by France, on condition that it should also be accepted by

England within one month after the ratification of the treaty. It was also stipulated, that until a definitive treaty of peace between France and England should be ratified, all the ports of Prussia should be closed against the English. The grand sacrifice, however, consummated by this treaty, was that of the power, and almost the existence, of Prussia as a kingdom. Raised to an unprecedented height by the genius of Frederic the Great, she was in a single day reduced to the rank of a secondary state. All that had been done by Frederic, in twenty years, to augment and aggrandize the monarchy, was thus undone by a *coup de plume*. By the articles of the treaty, Prussia was brought back nearly to the same boundary lines that marked her outline previously to the partition of Poland, in 1772; and those parts of Poland which Prussia acquired by the partition, or which she had subsequently, at different times, seized upon, were given to the king of Saxony, under the title of the grand duchy of Warsaw, and a communication was established between the kingdom of Saxony, and the new province, by means of a military road across Silesia, in the states of Prussia; the number of troops to be allowed to pass at one time, and the resting places, with magazines, to be fixed by a particular agreement between the two sovereigns, under the mediation, or, more correctly, the control of France. In conformity with this arrangement, a new constitution was given to the duchy of Warsaw, for the security of the privileges of the people, and of the neighbouring states. This constitution abolished slavery, and established equality of rights amongst all classes of the citizens; the king of Saxony held the executive power, and a senate of eighteen members, with a lower house of deputies, amounting to 100, passed into laws, or rejected at pleasure, such *projets* as he submitted to their consideration.* The city of Dantzic, with a surrounding terri-

* This constitution, modelled on that of France, was presented, approved of by Napoleon, who styled himself "By the Grace of God and the Constitution, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine," and signed by him at Dresden, as early as July 22.

tory of two leagues, was restored to her former independence, to be governed by the laws by which she was governed when she ceased to be her own mistress, the kings of Prussia and Saxony being mutually guaranteed to her protection. The freedom of the Vistula was also stipulated, and the king of Prussia, the king of Saxony, and the city of Dantzic, were severally bound not to oppose any obstacles to its navigation, under the names of tolls, rights, or duties of any kind. With a view to establish a "natural boundary" between Russia and the duchy of Warsaw, a certain extent of territory, that had previously belonged to Prussia, was united "for ever" to the empire of Russia. A cessation of hostilities between Russia and the Ottoman Porte was also agreed to, and the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Turkish provinces, upon condition that those provinces should not be occupied by the troops of the grand seignor until after a definitive treaty should be ratified, Napoleon being accepted on the part of Russia as a mediator. The two emperors bound themselves to ensure mutually to each other the integrity of their possessions, and those of the powers included in the treaty, in the state in which they were thus settled. Such were the principal articles of the treaty that were made public; but in addition to these, there were also secret articles, by which Sweden and Denmark were to be compelled to declare against England, and to place their fleets at the disposal of France, and by which Russia bound herself to assist France in the war with England, by closing her ports against British commerce, and lending herself to enforce the continental system, in the event of a failure of the pending negotiations for peace. The existence of these secret articles is placed beyond all doubt by the subsequent conduct of Alexander, who declared war against his ally, the king of Sweden, because he remained faithful to the principles which Alexander himself had abandoned, and violently wrested from him a part of his frontier province of Finland, obtaining, thereby, a covering territory of the

utmost importance for his own capital ; and who, in the following October, only three months after the treaty was signed, annulled all his conventions with England, resumed the system of the armed neutrality, and terminated abruptly the commercial intercourse between England and Russia: — measures which were regarded by the landed proprietors and merchants, not only in St. Petersburg and the Baltic provinces, but all throughout the empire, with murmurs and sullen execrations.

The gain to Alexander by this treaty was considerable. Russia was left not merely in the enjoyment of her former possessions, but she received a considerable accession of territory : she recovered her preponderance in the Baltic and the Black Seas, and acquired the power of being always able to pass the frontiers of Germany ; Prussia, hitherto a formidable obstacle to her designs, was diminished to a petty European government ; and Poland, the great barrier to her gigantic ambition, was annihilated.

In assenting to these arrangements, Alexander acted with unparalleled faithlessness to his former allies. There was not a single member of the great European confederation, which he had been originally so ardent in his desire to organise against France, that was not compromised by his acquiescence in the articles of the treaty of Tilsit. With equal and wholesale perfidy he betrayed them all. The first violation of good faith was that which led to all the rest, and which formed the basis of the treaty — his recognition of the wanton spoliations of Napoleon, and of all the thrones which that inspired adventurer had set up. With the map of Europe before them, their mighty differences cast to the winds, and locked in a grasp of mercenary friendship, they decided the limits of future kingdoms, and laid the seeds of more sanguinary wars than had even then scarred the face of the Continent. Austria, who was not openly invaded by the treaty, was exposed to perpetual jealousy and discord by the establishment of

the road for the transport of troops across Silesia. Prussia, deprived of the acquisitions of a quarter of a century, was struck down from the high place she occupied, and which rendered her important to the maintenance of the balance of power — a wise provision against the encroachments of despotism, which has been too often treated with inconsiderate contempt, as a conspiracy of despots against the freedom of nations. Poland, instead of being elevated by Napoleon, as she was led to expect, into an independent kingdom, was deluded by the shadow of a constitution; and, like Italy, defrauded of her liberties. Sweden, the honourable and gallant ally of Russia, through the instrumentality of this extraordinary league, was first despoiled of a part of her territory, and the remainder was afterwards wrested from the last of her race of heroes. Denmark, drawn into a ruinous compact which she was too weak to resist, was exposed to the fleets of England, and made to suffer deeply for the treachery in which she was a passive participator; and England, to whom, in their extremity, the prostrated states of Europe looked for succour and deliverance, was forced into a war, which Russia, at this eventful juncture, had she acted with integrity, might have averted. Such were the immediate results of the treaty of Tilsit.

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